METRO / A23

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By Jeannette I. Andrade

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NOBODY / A6

website: www.inquirer.net
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Saturday, September 15, 2007 ★★ 11 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 279 P18

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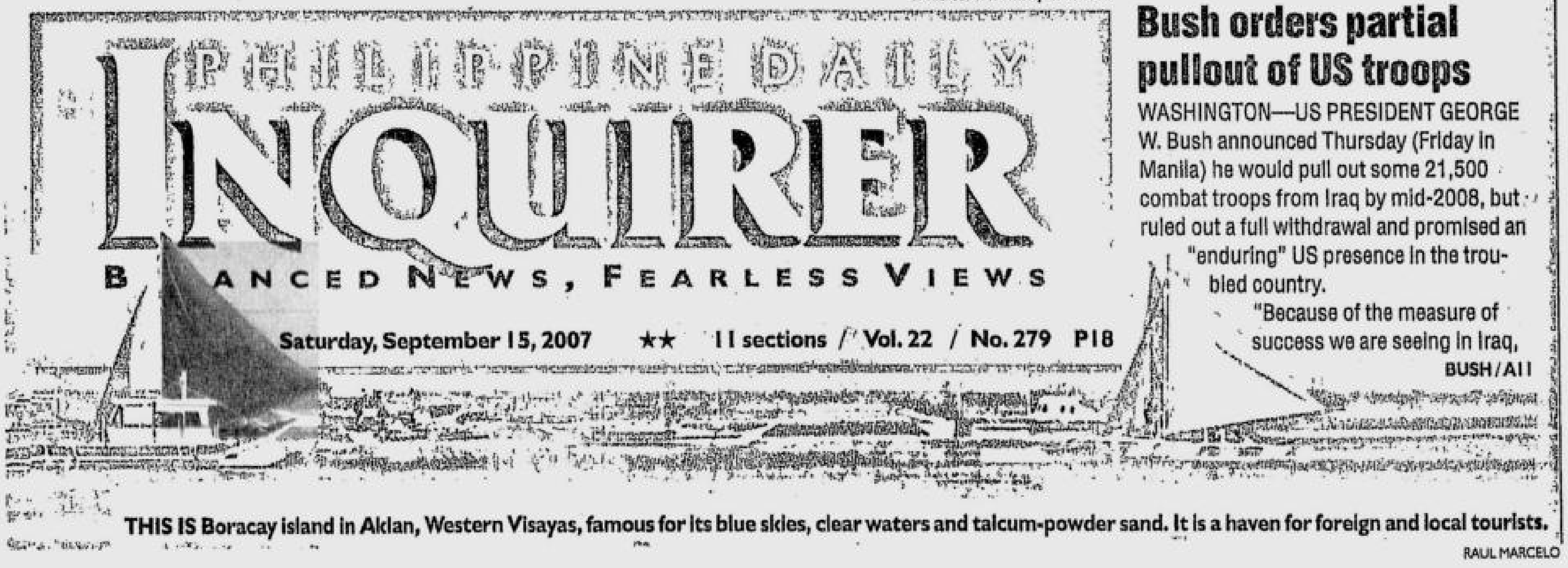
BUSH / A11



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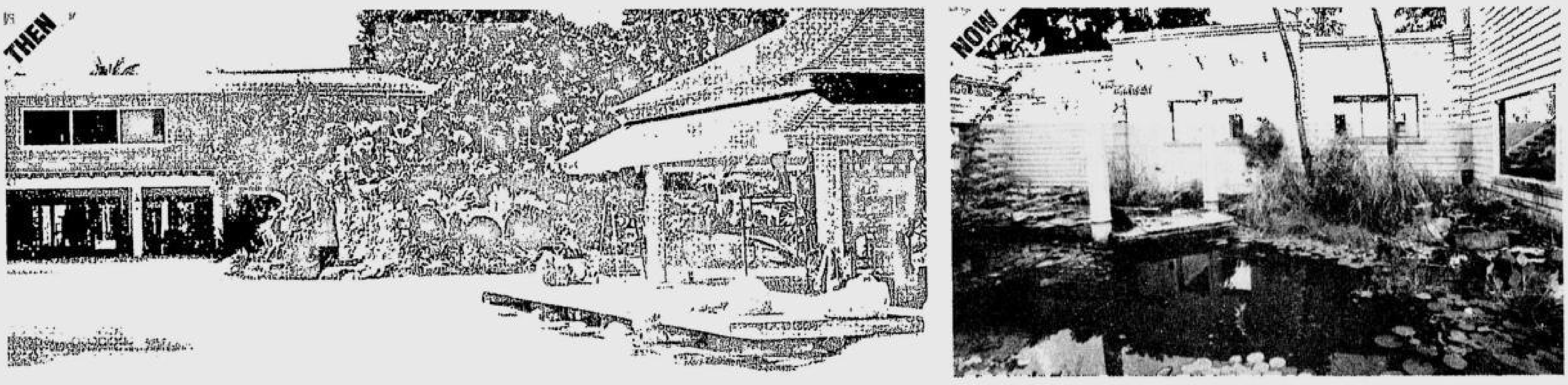
RAUL MARCELO



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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

JDV's son bares threats

Joma on jail: I felt like living in a toilet

By TJ Burgonio

AFTER 17 DAYS OF DETENTION at a Dutch penitentiary facility where "I felt like living in a toilet," Jose Ma. Sison feels relieved to be free again, is confident his case would be dismissed, and plans to sue Dutch authorities.

"I'm overjoyed that I'm out of solitary confinement," Sison said yesterday from his home in Utrecht. "It was humiliating to be subjected to solitary confinement and tough interrogation under overheated lamps."

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The Hague court ordered his release Thursday, saying "the files do not include sufficient indications that the accused, while living in the

JOMA/ A12

JOSE MA. SISON, founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines, leaves prison with his belongings in a sack Thursday in Scheveningen in the Netherlands.

REUTERS

Ridiculous, says Abalos of wiretap rap

By Leila B. Salaverria

FINDING HIMSELF IN ANOTHER wiretapping controversy, Commission on Elections chair Benjamin Abalos yesterday denied he ordered the bugging of the phone of businessman Joey de Venecia III in connection with the $329-million national broadband network deal and branded the latter's allegations as "ridiculous."

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De Venecia had claimed in an affidavit that he learned his phone had been wiretapped when Abalos called him and berated him for telling oficials of the

RIDICULOUS/ A8

All 'fairy tales,' says DOTC's Mendoza

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Christian V. Esguerra

FOR OPPOSING THE $329-MILLION NATIONAL Broadband Network deal clinched by China's ZTE Corp. and exposing the alleged corruption surrounding the project, businessman Jose "Joey" de Venecia III has purportedly received threats from powerful persons.

De Venecia, cofounder of Amsterdam Holdings Inc. (AHI) and a son and namesake of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, said he had received three threatening messages so far, including one that supposedly came from the camp of Transportation and Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza.

Asked to comment, Mendoza said: "I don't want to dignify fairy tales being woven by a losing bidder. Neither do I threaten people because it's out of my character. I just do what I have to do."

AHI is one of the companies that wanted to bid for the NBN project but was sidetracked when Mendoza signed the contract with ZTE officials last April, in the presence of President Macapagal-Arroyo in Boao, China.

De Venecia told the INQUIRER that a friend of his—who, according to him, was "very close" to Commission on Elections Chair. Benjamin Abalos—had relayed to him that Mendoza was "hunting me down."

"Joey, you should be wary of Mendoza. Abalos is Abalos, but Mendoza is a general," he quoted his friend as saying.

But Mendoza denied this and declined to answer further questions on the NBN project that the Supreme Court had declared temporarily on hold.

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He said the government would leave it to the courts to decide whether there was irregularity in the deal.

JDV'S SON/ A8

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Gonzalez undergoes surgery

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The operation began at 7 a.m. yesterday, said the source, who asked not to be identified because he had no authority to issue a statement.

The donor was Gonzalez's driver, whom another source identified as Felicito Gunay,

GONZALEZ / A6

Rustom's gay redemption: Urian award

By Gerry Plaza
Inquirer.net

IT WAS A SHINING MOMENT FOR AN ACTOR whose courageous disclosure of his sexuality appears to have triggered discord within his tightly knit family. At Thursday night's rain-drenched 2007 Gawad Urian at the Henry Lee Irwin Theater on the Ateneo de Manila University campus, he said he hoped his victory was a step closer to "being with [them] again."

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RUSTOM'S/ A10

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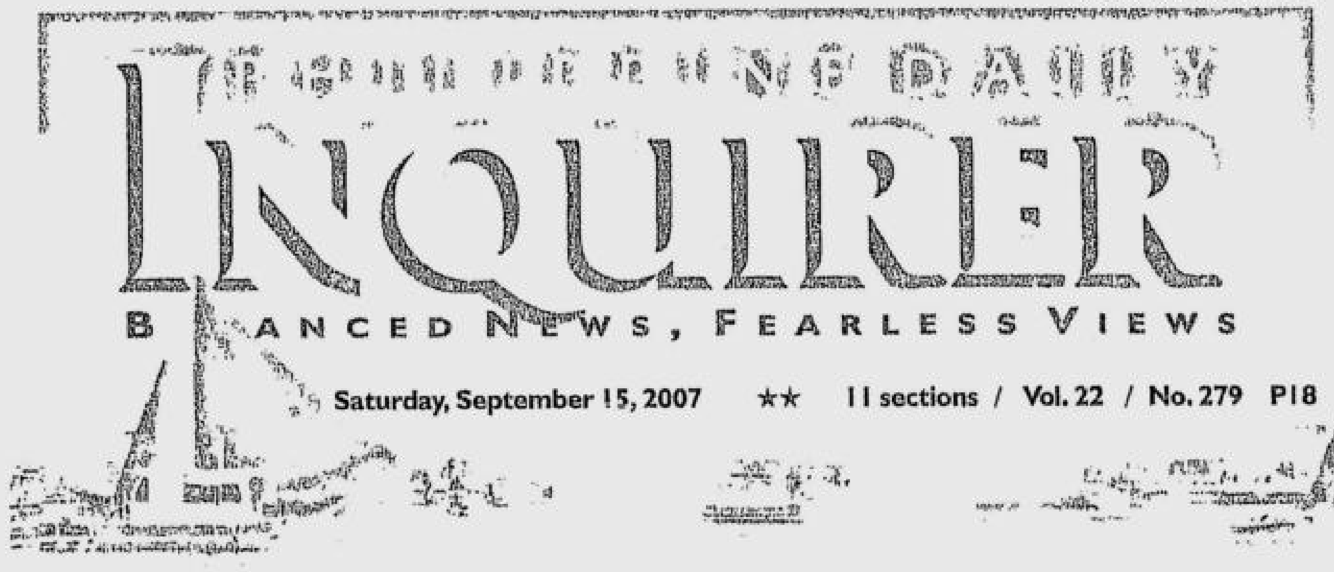

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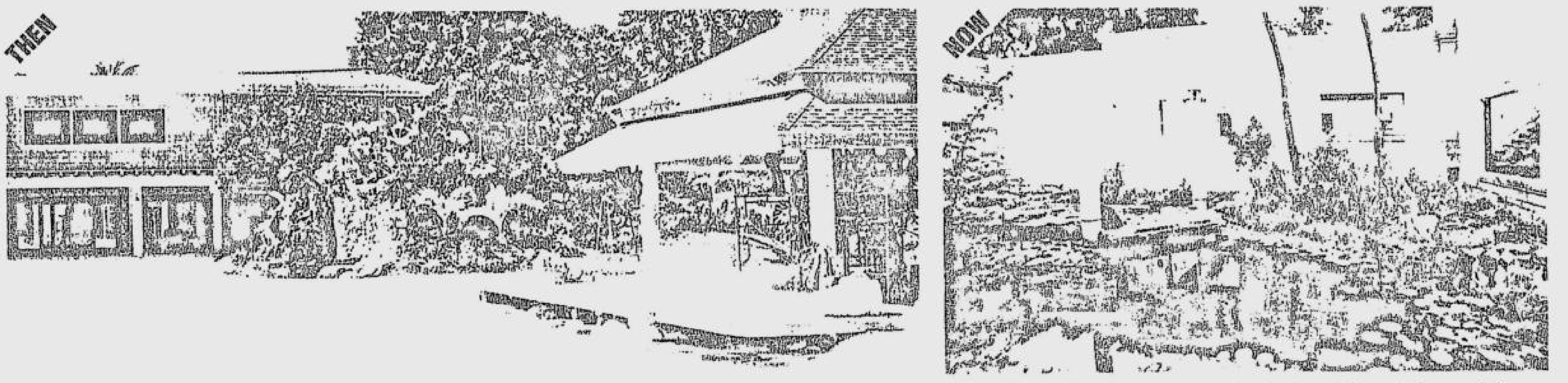

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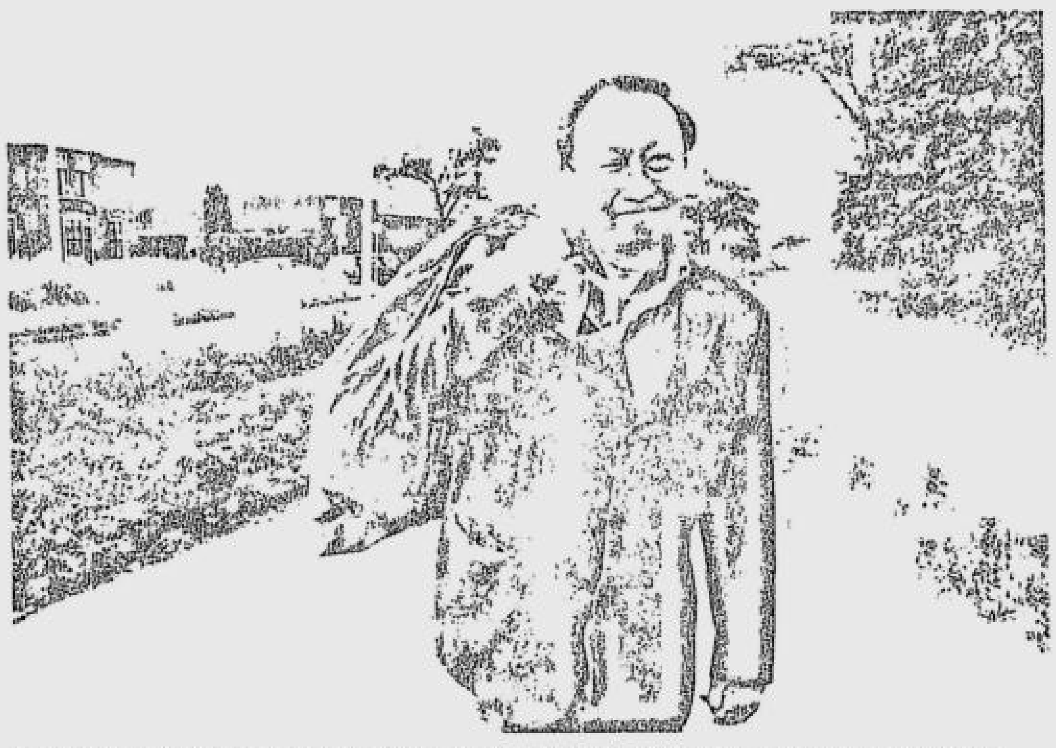

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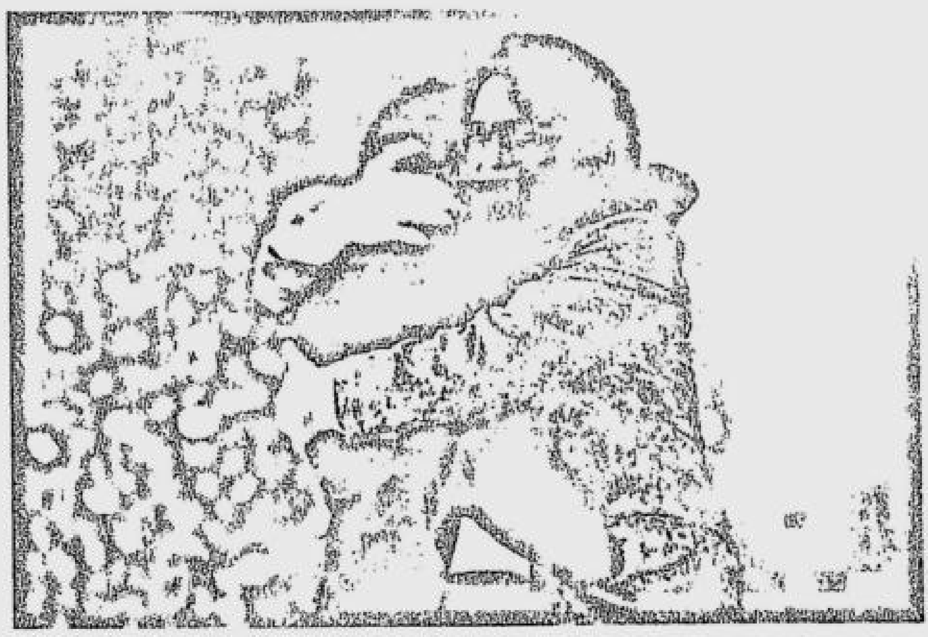

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Second
FRONTPAGE

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will continue to experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

COMPILED BY: SCHATZI QUODALA, PDI RESEARCH/09/14/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

EZ2

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(In exact order)

Mid-Day SUERTRES Evening

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MEGALOTTO 6/45

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PRESIDENTIAL PARDON, 'DI TALAGA PWEDE!

Amnesty may yet be acceptable

Key Erap ally opens possibility of reconciliation

WHAT'S INSIDE

FINANCE and trade officials fail to impress senators on what RP stands to gain from the Jpepa agreement /A9

EDUCATION chief gives in to solons' demand for a copy of the MOA on the cyber education project /A22

2 BROTHERS long wanted by the FBI nabbed by immigration agents in Quezon City /A4

By Christian V. Esguerra

PRESIDENTIAL PARDON IS out of the question, but amnesty may be acceptable.

A key ally of deposed President Joseph Estrada has opened the door for a possible reconciliation with the Arroyo administration, following the fallen leader's conviction for plunder by the Sandiganbayan.

Rep. Rufus Rodriguez, spokesperson of Estrada's Partido ng Masang Pilipino, on Thursday said the "all-encompassing" amnesty previously dangled by Speaker Jose de Venecia—not pardon—would be acceptable for the Estrada camp.

"Pardon will not be acceptable because it will entail the admission of guilt," Rodriguez told the INQUIRER during a break at the House committee on appropriations deliberations.

According to the Cagayan de Oro representative, amnesty does not bother with the guilt or innocence of a person. Instead, it "removes the act itself" without having to admit any wrongdoing.

No guilt admission

"Amnesty will probably be acceptable because there is no admission of guilt and it erases the crime itself," Rodriguez said.

Maintaining that Estrada was innocent of plunder, he appeared encouraged by the idea that the amnesty proposed by De Venecia was meant to foster "national unity and reconciliation."

Of the perceived enemies of the current administration, only Estrada was involved in a case, which—if addressed by amnesty—could achieve such an end, according to Rodriguez.

Last month, De Venecia floated a "wide-ranging, all-encompassing amnesty to cover all insurgents and all those who have committed political crimes against the state."

Consensus

Asked whether , Estrada would be included in the amnesty, the speaker replied: "Let it come normally. Let it be a consensus of all." At the time, Estrada had yet to be convicted by the antigraft court.

Rodriguez said he would speak with De Venecia on Monday to personally inquire about the amnesty proposal and how this could apply to Estrada.

In the meantime, he said he would also discuss the matter with the former president without prejudice to the elevation of the Sandiganbayan decision to the Supreme Court.

From the wide-ranging amnesty suggested by De Venecia, Malacañang has picked up the portion intended for communist insurgents.

President Macapagal-Arroyo signed Proclamation No. 1377, which invites insurgents waging the oldest Maoist rebellion in Asia to return to the folds of the law. The proclamation, which requires the concurrence of both chambers of Congress, has been transmitted to the House of Representatives.

Ms Arroyo should pardon Estrada, even though he's not asking for it, said the League of Cities of the Philippines (LCP), through its president, Mandaluyong City Mayor Benhur Abalos.

Right step

The president of the 120-strong organization said the presidential pardon is the right step toward bridging the gap between the political divides.

"I am supporting the suggestion of a presidential pardon for the convicted former president because I strongly believe that such will pave the way to national unity and reconciliation," Abalos said in a statement yesterday.

He noted that such a move was within the President's prerogative.

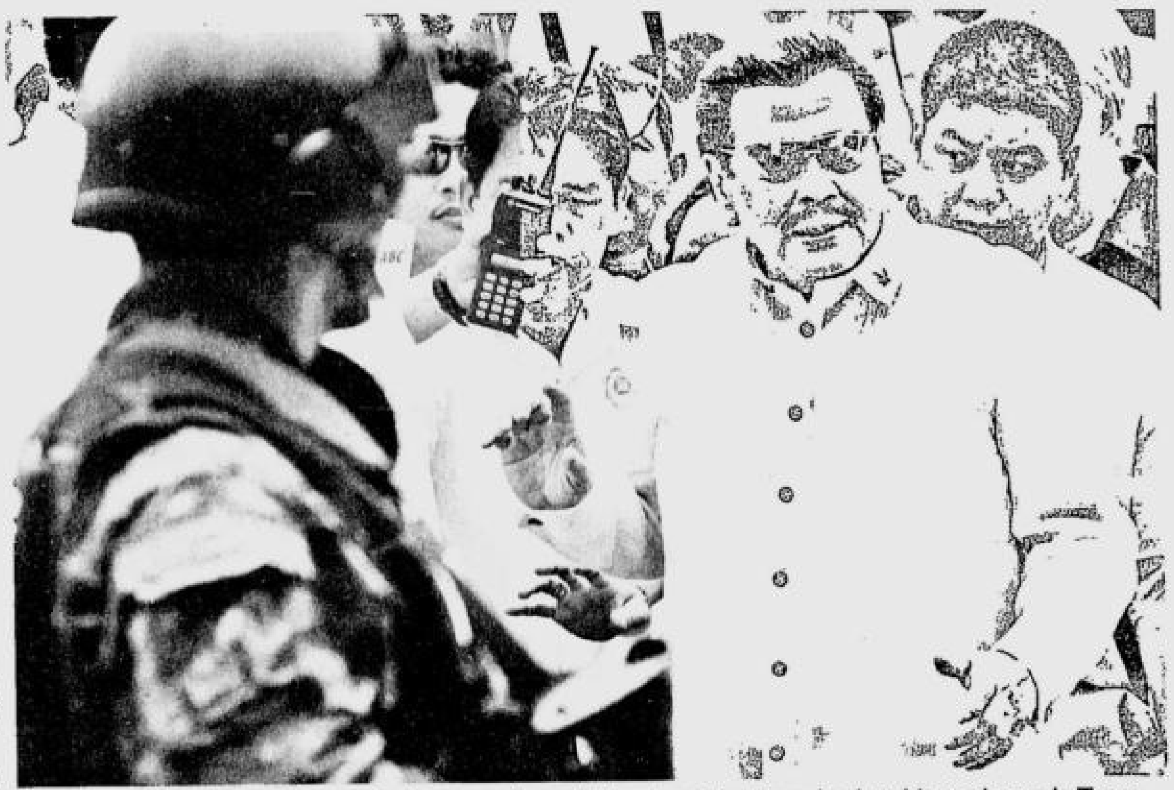
Abalos said he was set to sponsor a resolution in the LCP urging the administration to extend clemency to Estrada.

He also appealed to other city mayors to voice out their support for pardon for the former president.

Meanwhile, Estrada will still be allowed to receive visitors at his rest house in Tanay, Rizal.

Philippine National Police (PNP) Directorate for Operations chief Director Wilfredo Garcia said the antigraft court did not direct the police to bar anyone from visiting Estrada.

"We will allow the former president to receive visitors except if there's an order from the court barring visitors," said Garcia. *With reports from Kristine L. Alave and Alcuin Papa*



FORMER President Joseph Estrada is escorted to a helicopter to be flown back to his resthouse in Tanay after his conviction by the Sandiganbayan on Tuesday.

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Legal battle far from over, says prosecutor

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE VERDICT IS OUT BUT THE ESTRADA legal battle is far from over, according to Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio.

The 65-year-old lead prosecutor in the P4-billion plunder case against Joseph Estrada yesterday said there was still work to do in as far as the ousted president's civil liability was concerned.

Villa-Ignacio told the INQUIRER he was forming a 17-man team—five lawyers and 12 field investigators—to recover the P3.2 billion which previously formed the "Jose Velarde" account at the Equitable PCI Bank.

That account has been reduced to a measly P2,000. It has not been established who depleted it.

New team

"We are creating a team to pursue the civil aspect in recovering the illegally amassed wealth of the former President... it is a very big task as we have to look for paper trails to help us locate the P3.2 billion. They must have deposited it somewhere," he said.

In convicting Estrada of plunder and sentencing him up to 40 years in jail, the Sandiganbayan Special Division ordered the forfeiture of P545.291 million representing the amount Estrada amassed in "jueteng" payoffs, inclusive of the P200 million deposited in the Erap Muslim Youth Foundation account.

Forfeited

Also forfeited in favor of the government was the P189-million commission "collected" by Estrada from Belle Resources and the P142-million real estate in New Manila, Quezon City, dubbed the "Boracay Mansion."

Villa-Ignacio said this represented less than a quarter of the wealth believed to be illegally acquired by the former president.

The Special Division did not order the forfeiture of the P3.2-billion Jose Velarde account because the prosecution failed to establish the manner by which the deposits were acquired.

However, the special prosecutor stressed that the government was confident in running after Estrada's properties.

Australia warns its citizens vs traveling to Mindanao

AUSTRALIA WARNED ITS CITIZENS FRIday against traveling to the southern Philippines, where it said recent credible reports indicate terrorists plan to attack power infrastructure.

In a travel advisory posted on its website, Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade said "credible information indicates terrorists may be in the advanced stages of planning attacks."

"The attacks may be imminent and could occur at any time anywhere in Mindanao," the advisory said.

It offered no details. Australia had issued similar warnings earlier though they did not mention power facilities.

Al-Qaida-linked militants have been blamed for several bombings recently as US-backed Philippine troops battled extremists on nearby Jolo and Basilan islands.

Australia's advisory also warned terrorists may be plotting attacks on places frequented by foreigners, including in the capital, Manila, and the south.

They include bars, shopping malls, fast food outlets and places of worship, as well as ports and airports.

In 2004, Abu Sayyaf militants, notorious for kidnappings and beheadings, blew up a passenger ferry in Manila Bay, killing 116 people in the country's worst terrorist attack. *AP*

Gloria wants computerized barangay polls

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL ARROYO wants the forthcoming barangay elections to be computerized, more than a month before the nation holds the polls along with the Sangguniang Kabataan elections on Oct. 27.

The President made the call yesterday as she urged the nation's women to help the government push for the modernization of elections.

"Let us use our right of suffrage to modernize the Philippines to make the life of our sisters a better one with more economic opportunity, greater social justice and better future for our children," Ms Arroyo said in a speech she delivered during the 70th anniversary celebration of Women's Suffrage at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City.

In her speech, President Arroyo urged women to exercise their right to vote and said that they could exercise this right "to its fullest," by crusading for electoral reforms.

"Our administration has long provided funds for computerization of elections," Ms Arroyo said. "Let's campaign for modernization of voting, counting and canvassing starting with the coming barangay elections."

She also asked for the people to unite on this issue. "We can disagree on political goals but not on the conduct of democratic elections."

She urged women to lobby for a law to fund poll watchdogs and a stronger law against election-related violence.

"To be able to lobby for all of these...we count on organizations like the women's organizations represented here...to empower women to organize at the grassroot level with training on leadership, communication, negotiation, assertiveness," the President said. *Christine O. Avendaño*

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Immigration agents nab 2 brothers wanted by FBI

By Margaux C. Ortiz

TWO FILIPINO-AMERICAN brothers long wanted by United States federal authorities for a string of gang-related murder and attempted murder cases have been arrested by immigration agents in Quezon City.

Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Libanan said fugitives Marvin Aclaro Mercado, 34, and his brother Pierre, 33, were arrested on Thursday at their condominium residence.

Libanan said the Mercado brothers have been on the wanted list of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) since 1997 when they fled to the Philippines to evade arrest and prosecution.

Marvin and Pierre will be deported to the US to face the charges, "after which they would be blacklisted and banned from reentering the Philippines," Libanan said.

He said the Mercados have been on the Bureau of Immigration's wanted list since Nov. 20, 1996 after the FBI informed the bureau about the brothers' escape to the Philippines.

He said the Mercados are also covered by federal arrest warrants for unlawful flight to avoid persecution.

"They will be deported for being undocumented and undesirable aliens because the US State Department earlier cancelled their US passports," Libanan said.

According to BI technical assistant for intelligence Victor Boco, the Mercados are members of the notorious Asian Boyz gang in California and have been described as "extremely violent" by US authorities for their alleged involvement in a series of gang-related murders in 1995.

BI travel records revealed that Marvin fled to Manila on June 12, 1996 while Pierre followed him on Aug. 12, 2000.

Boco said Marvin has been charged with six counts of murder, 13 counts of attempted murder and four counts of conspiracy to commit murder with a firearm.

"[Marvin] is wanted in the US for his alleged involvement in the murder of two Hispanic gang members in Van Nuys, California, wherein one of the victims was shot 43 times," Boco said.

Marvin's other cases pertained to his alleged role in the murder of rival gang members, most of whom were reportedly killed without provocation, according to the FBI.

Pierre was charged with two counts of attempted murder. Boco said one of the cases stemmed from Pierre's involvement in a car-to-car shooting at the Los Angeles freeway.

Corrections

IN THE SEPT. 14 ISSUE, A photo caption on the front page—"Showing their true colors"—misstated the name of an animal rights group. The organization's name is People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals—not People Ethical Treatment of Animals.

***

IN THE SAME ISSUE, AN article on Page A25 of the Metro section—"8th suspect in child rape-slay gives up"—misstated the designation of Senior Supt. Nelson Yabut. Yabut is the chief of Manila Police District's Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit—not the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group Quezon City field office.

***

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

Senate president Manny Villar receives a plaque of appreciation after delivering a speech Friday at the 70th anniversary celebration of women's suffrage at the Philippine International Convention Center. Presenting the plaque are Rosario R. Villar (left), president of the NFWC Foundation, and Julita C. Benedicto, NFWC Foundation overall jubilee chair. Hundreds of women leaders throughout the country joined the assembly, which was also attended by President Macapagal-Arroyo as guest of honor.

ROGER MARGALLO

4 combat-weary MILF men give up

AFTER NEARLY FIVE YEARS OF working in Manila as pedicab drivers, four combat-weary fighters of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) voluntarily surrendered Thursday to Army troops stationed in Baseco Compound, an Army commander said yesterday.

The four rebels left Maguindanao in 2002 because "they have grown tired of fighting," Col. Ricardo Visaya, commander of the Army Civil Military Operations (CMO) Battalion, told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

Three months ago, nine other MILF rebels surrendered to the CMO in Metro Manila, Visaya said.

Visaya added that the surrender showed the MILF members' "confidence" in the troops deployed in various communities in Metro Manila.

Visaya said the four insurgents turned over an M-16 shotgun, a Thompson .45 caliber armalite, two .45-caliber pistols, and assorted ammunition.

"Some of the weapons are theirs. The others, they got from their fellow MILF members who have also sought refuge here in Manila," Visayas said.

The Army commander said there are about 50 more MILF members living in Metro Manila, but he guaranteed that they are "not security threats."

"They are just here because they have grown tired of fighting in Mindanao," Visaya said.

Nikko Dizon

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, September 15, 2007
Our Lady of Sorrows

1st Reading:	Heb 5:7-9
Gospel:	Luke 2:33-35

His father and mother wondered at what was said about the child. Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother, "See him; he will be for the rise or fall of the multitudes of Israel. He shall stand as a sign of contradiction, while a sword will pierce your own soul. Then the secret thoughts of many may be brought to light."

Commentary

Jesus is the one who suffered with us and for us, revealing how to be human in the face of pain and sorrow. All of us who are his followers must learn how to be obedient and how to remain faithful in the face of the violence, horror and misery that human beings inflict upon one another in sin.

Jesus dies broken, humiliated, and tortured through crucifixion—the legal and massively unjust form of capital punished used by the Romans on those that threatened their power. Jesus dies alone, except in John's gospel, where his mother, his mother's sister, Mary of Cleopas, Mary of Magdala, and the disciple whom Jesus loved, stand witness in his company, in silent sorrow and mourning. This is the beloved community. This is where all of us who are baptized are to be found—sorrowing with his mother and the others at the foot of the cross where millions still are crucified. Where do we stand together in witness and solidarity?

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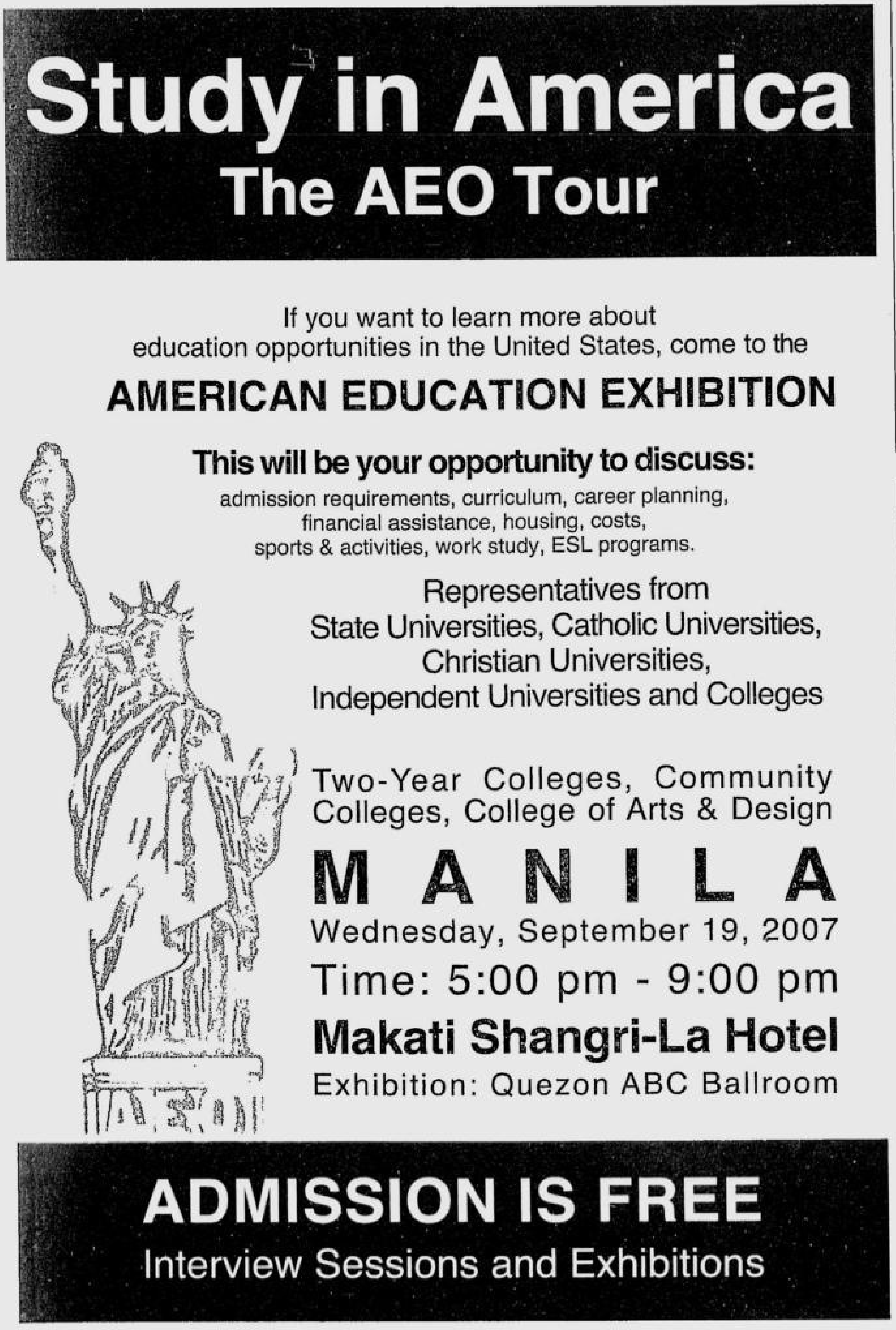

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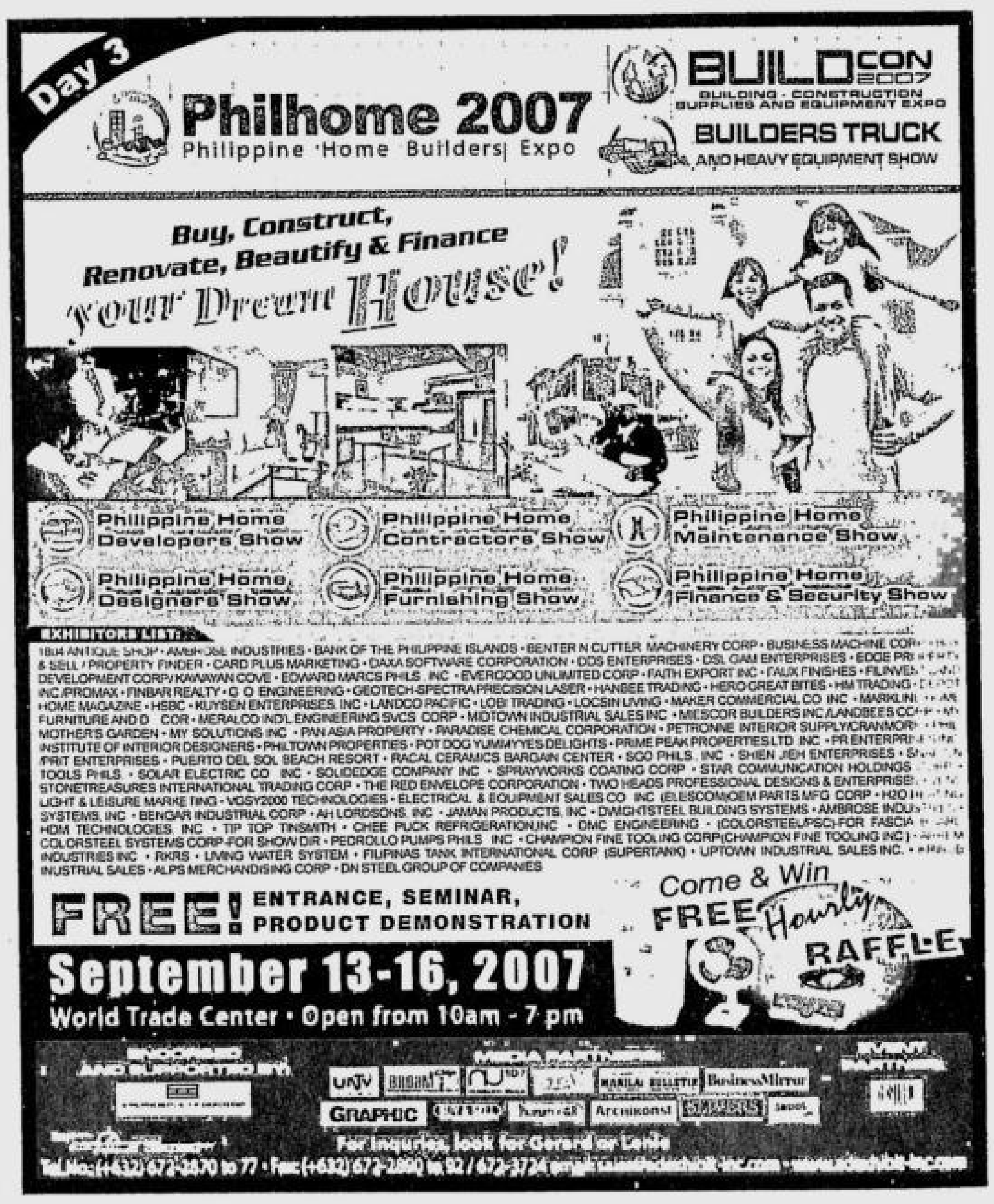

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Low pressure area spotted over N. Luzon

A LOW PRESSURE AREA HAS developed over northern Luzon hours before typhoon "Falcon" (international code name: Neri) exited last night toward Japan, the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said yesterday.

The low pressure area, a weather system associated with rain, has little effect on the southwest monsoon, according to Pagasa forecaster Christopher Perez.

The typhoon induced the southwest monsoon to bring rain to southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. The heaviest rainfall of 39 mm was recorded in Batangas in southern Luzon from Thursday morning to Friday morning, according to Perez.

As it exited toward southern Japan, the cyclone, packing maximum sustained winds of 140 kph and with gustiness of 170 kph, no longer posed a threat to any part of the archipelago, Pagasa said.

The southwest monsoon, enhanced by the typhoon, however, would continue to bring rain over the western sections of Luzon and Mindanao, it said. *TJ Burgonio*

AFP backtracks on Jonas case

By Nikko Dizon

APPARENTLY BENT ON ENGAGING the family of missing activist Jonas Burgos in a "legal battle," the Armed Forces of the Philippines yesterday said there are "legal procedures" it could undertake to keep confidential its investigation report on the loss of a car license plate in its custody but later seen allegedly on one of the abductors' vehicles.

It was a complete turnaround from the statement given by AFP chief of staff Hermogenes Esperon Jr. himself a week ago that the military will abide by the order of the Court of Appeals and release the report.

Explaining the military's new position, AFP spokesperson, Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro, merely said "there are legal procedures that could still be employed so as not to release the report."

Told that Esperon had already agreed to release the report, Bacarro said "there are still legal procedures that could be employed" to keep the report confidential.

Bacarro cited the motion for reconsideration to be filed by the Solicitor General and a memorandum circular that states "disclosure policies" on certain documents.

Asked if the AFP will release the report only after the courts rule with finality, Bacarro replied: "We will see what the comments of (our lawyers) would be. It's a legal battle. We have a defense counsel, which is the solicitor general. We will see as things develop in court."

In an interview on Sept. 7 at Camp Aguinaldo, Esperon had told reporters that the military will release the report following the order of the Court of Appeals.

"It's a legal court order so by all means we have to follow the court order and the laws of the land," Esperon had said.

Nonetheless, he had also pointed out in the interview that the report has been marked "confidential … so that the integrity of some people will not be prejudiced, as well as some security concerns."

"I don't know how the Court of Appeals will treat it if they see some security matters there. But it's a court order and we recognize that. We will comply (with) it," Esperon had said.

The family of Burgos, 36, believes the military was behind his abduction on April 28 after the license plates (TAB 194) on the abductors' getaway vehicle was traced to an impounded vehicle at the headquarters of the 56th Infantry Battalion in Norzagaray, Bulacan.

But military officials claimed that the license plates got lost in the camp in late 2006, prompting the AFP Provost Marshall to conduct an investigation into its disappearance.

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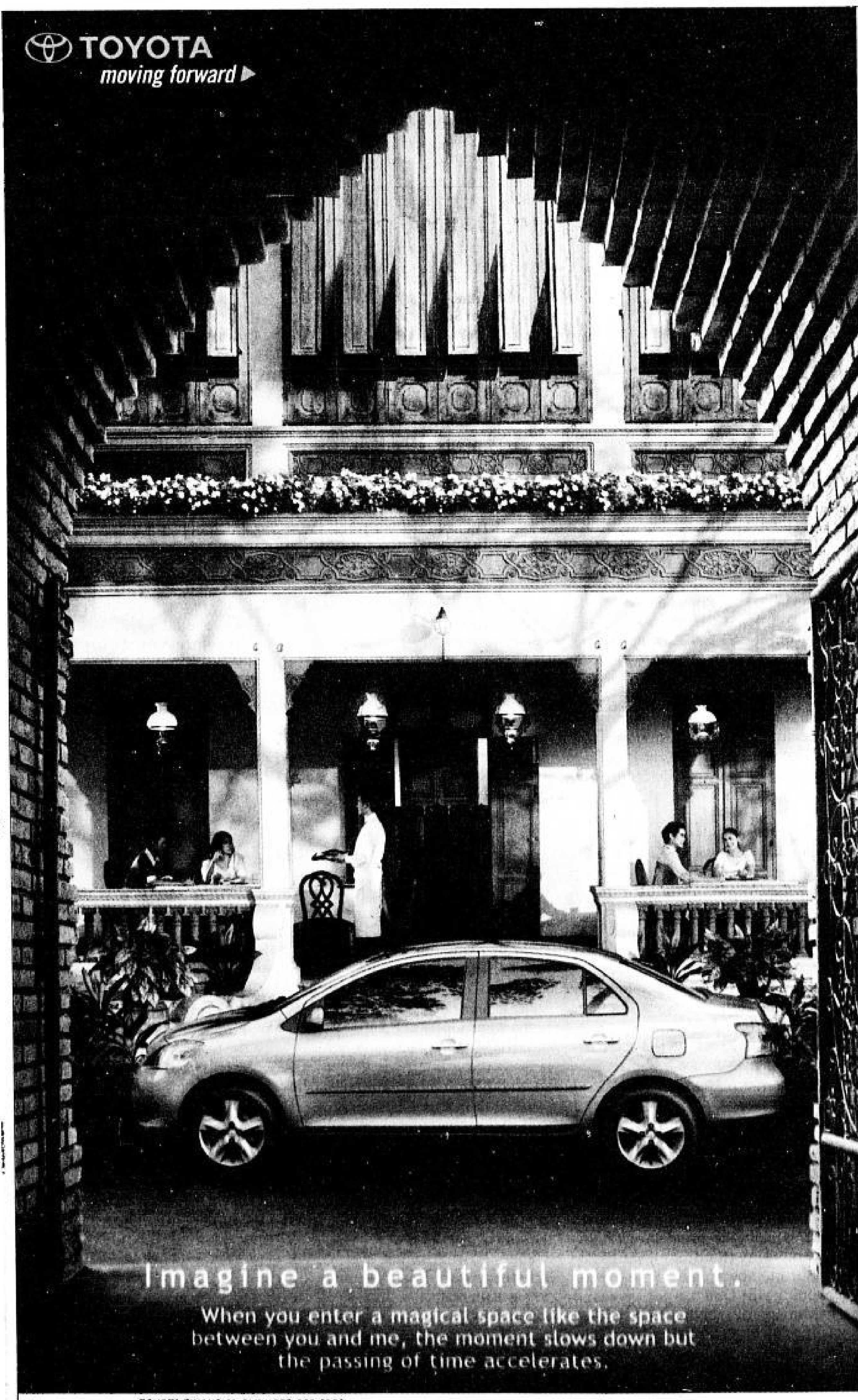

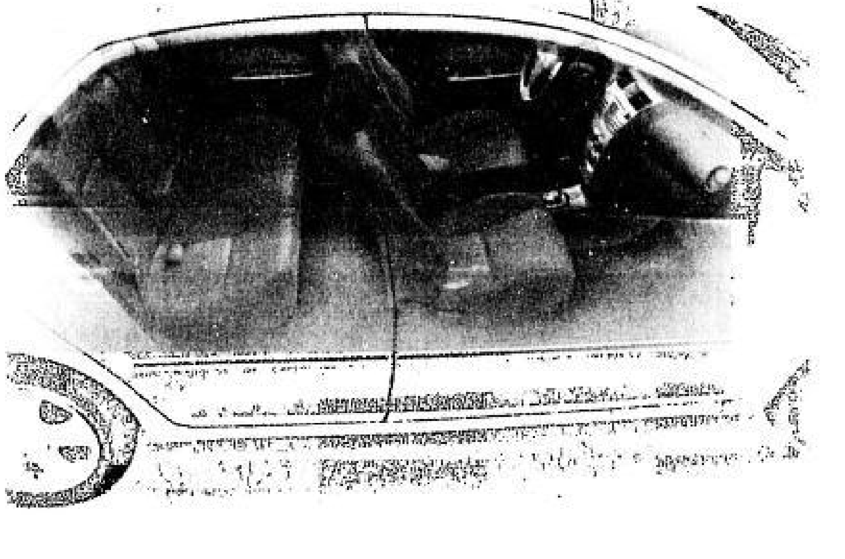

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THE P142-MILLION Boracay mansion before it went to seed. INQUIRER PHOTO

THIS IS what's left of what was once a mansion in upscale New Manila in Quezon City in this photo taken Friday. JOAN BONDOC

'Nobody wants Boracay Mansion'

From page A1

treasurer Victor Endriga.

In September 2005, the Quezon City government set up an auction for the 7,400-square-meter property located at 100 10th and 11th Streets, in New Manila, after its owners failed to pay P1.7 million in real property taxes that had accumulated since 2000.

Before the mansion was put up for auction, St. Peter's Holdings Inc., its registered owner, was served notice of possible forfeiture for nonpayment of real property taxes. However, the Quezon City government found that there was no longer a company by that name at the address given, 15th floor, Strata 100 building in the Ortigas business district.

"The company was no longer there, like it just vanished," said Endriga.

The disappearance of the registered owner of the property enabled the city government to proceed with the auction of the mansion after the five-year grace period. However, the auction ended with no bidders, resulting in its forfeiture in favor of the city government.

St. Peter's Holdings is alleged to be a front corporation formed by five senior partners of the De Borja, Medialdea, Bello, Guevarra, Serapio and Gerodias law office to purchase almost a billion pesos worth of land and houses in Estrada's behalf from 1998 and until shortly before his ouster in 2000.

Jose Yulo, Estrada's buddy and short-lived housing adviser who acted as St. Peter's chair, signed the deal for the purchase of the property from the Madrigal family on Oct. 1, 1999.

The mansion was said to be a gift that Estrada gave his mistress and mother of three of his many children, the ex-starlet Laarni Enriquez. Estrada said his family by Enriquez lived at the mansion for a few months in 2002 but claimed that the property was owned by a crony, businessman Jaime Dichaves.

At Estrada's impeachment and subsequent plunder trial, state prosecutors said that Estrada used money from illegal gambling bribes to acquire the Boracay Mansion which they said was worth P142 million.

Former Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, the government's main witness at the plunder trial, described a meeting he had with Estrada at the Boracay Mansion to discuss "jueteng," the illegal numbers game.

During the trial, the antigraft court arranged an inspection of the by then abandoned property in 2003.

Following its judgment finding Estrada guilty beyond reasonable doubt of the crime of plunder, promulgated last Wednesday, the Sandiganbayan ordered the forfeiture in favor of the government of the Boracay Mansion.

Endriga said the reason there have been no takers for the property may be the legal complications associated with it.

"Interested bidders may have been afraid of getting involved in a property that has been so controversial," he said.

The Boracay Mansion is one of five pieces of Estrada property which the Sandiganbayan has ordered forfeited in favor of the government.

The Quezon City government said it would question the inclusion of the Boracay Mansion as it was now the city's property.

"Our legal department has sent a letter to the Sandiganbayan to inform the court that the property no longer belongs to former President Estrada but is now owned by the Quezon City government," Endriga said.

He said the city government would wait for the response of the Sandiganbayan before deciding what to do with the mansion which he said could be converted into a museum or a library.

Endriga said the property has been sadly devalued with the destruction of the main structure.

"It has been ransacked. The lot is the only thing that still has value in that property. There is nothing left of the house," he remarked.

Endriga said the entire roof of the once lavish residence has been looted and the reportedly gold fixtures in the bathrooms removed. Even the steel railings of the fence were not spared by looters who pulled them out possibly to sell to junk shops.

"The property has long been abandoned. There is no security guard, that's why it was easily ransacked. Without the property being cleared by the court, we could not do anything to stop the looting," the city treasurer said.

The only trace of the mansion's history of luxury and excess is a few pillars and a roofless façade.

The fine white sand that was reportedly flown in from the renowned resort island, for which the mansion was named, has been replaced by rubble. The swimming pool is now just a huge, ugly hole.

"The city mayor (Feliciano Belmonte) has many plans for Boracay Mansion. But we cannot move until the Sandiganbayan clears the property from any legal encumbrances," Endriga said.

Pacman packs more 'power' than Erap

From page A1

on the plunder case of former President Joseph Estrada, who was voted to office by 11 million people.

According to data from the Philippine Electricity Market Corp., the operator of the wholesale electricity spot market (WESM), power demand spiked by 111 megawatts last Wednesday when the Sandiganbayan handed down its decision on the plunder charges against Estrada.

However, the power demand spikes were more significant on days when the Pacquiao fights were televised, said PEMC executive vice president Mario Pangilinan.

"During the last Pacquiao match, we saw a rise of around 400 MW in power demand. We're anticipating that Pacquiao's match in October will result in the same demand rise," he said in a briefing yesterday.

The demand surge, he said, was very significant, considering that big boxing matches such as Pacquiao's usually took place Sunday mornings.

Sunday is considered an off-peak period in the power sector, as demand is usually lower on this day because of slow activity from industrial power users.

Power demand trends

Power demand spikes take place even on days when there are no Pacquiao fights or a promulgation of a court decision on Erap.

Based on historical data, power demand is traditionally higher during the summer months—from March to June—when the weather is warmer and more people turn on air-conditioners.

Demand is lower during weekends and holidays and times when most industries cease operations—usually very early in the morning and late at night.

Forecasting is important, both on the supply and demand side, as this gives PEMC an idea of where prices will go.

In August, for example, prices at the electricity spot market were lower due to reduced consumer demand and lower price offers by the electricity traders.

The WESM, like the stock market, is a venue where electricity is traded as a commodity by generating companies, distribution utilities and electric cooperatives.

Unlike in August, electricity spot prices in July were higher due to an "extended summer" and coal supply constraints, which prompted the use of more expensive oil-based power plants.

Pangilinan said the current supply should be able to meet demand, even considering that power consumption would likely spike again by around 400 MW next month when Pacquiao faces Marco Antonio Barrera in a much anticipated fight.

"We have enough (power) reserves," he said.

Gonzalez undergoes surgery

From page A1

nicknamed Muroy.

The second source, who also had no permission to speak, described Gunay as a trusted employee of Gonzalez who has been with the secretary for many years.

Gunay is so close to the secretary that Gonzalez considers him as one of his children, the source said.

Dr. Enrique Ona, the NKTI executive director, confirmed in a phone interview that he handled the operation on Gonzalez but did not want to say what type of surgery it was.

"I will issue a medical bulletin and explain the procedure tomorrow morning (Saturday)," he said.

But members of his staff, in explaining why Ona has not answered media queries about the surgery, said, "Doctors cannot issue a medical bulletin immediately after a transplant."

They said Ona would probably issue a medical bulletin on Monday.

"The doctor has been at the operating room since morning. It took several hours. He must be tired, that's why he did not grant any interview," one of Ona's staffers said.

Acting Justice Secretary Agnes Devanadera said she knew that Gonzalez was scheduled to undergo a kidney transplant yesterday.

Devanadera said she visited Gonzalez a few days before his scheduled operation, and he appeared to be strong and was his usual self.

Even though he was in bed, his hair was slickly combed back, she said.

"I told him, *manong*, you have to get well because there is a lot of work waiting for me at the [Office of the] Solicitor General. I told him he's a fighter, and he said he'll fight," said Devanadera, who is also the solicitor general.

She said that when she visited him, there was already a donor for the transplant.

Senior State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco said he wished Gonzalez well and was hoping for his speedy recovery.

Kidney transplant involves the implantation of a healthy kidney into a patient suffering from kidney failure.

Kidney failure in turn can be caused by uncontrolled high blood pressure, infection or diabetes.

According to the US National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health, over 90 percent of kidney recipients survive for at least a year after the operation. After a decade, about half of the transplanted kidneys remain functional.

The US agencies add that the possibility of survival is higher if the healthy kidney came from a living relative of the patient, rather than from someone unrelated to the patient or from a recently deceased person.

Recovery period for the donor is four to six weeks. The kidney recipient, on the other hand, has to be kept under observation in a hospital for a week. After being discharged, the donor will require constant monitoring.

Organ rejection is a big risk in every transplant surgery. The patient's immune system identifies the new organ as a foreign object and tries to destroy it. This is why almost all recipients require life-long suppression of immune response.

Because of the suppression, the patient will be more at risk of contracting illnesses. *With a report from Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research*

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INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The Philippine National Oil Company ("PNOC"), through the Privatization Committee of PNOC ("PRIVACOM"), invites interested parties to pre-qualify and to bid ("Bidding") for shares in PNOC Energy Development Corporation ("PNOC EDC") held by PNOC and certain shareholders, which shares collectively represent 60% of the outstanding capital stock of PNOC EDC (the "Shares"), as follows:

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Common	6,000,000,000	26.67%
Preferred	7,500,000,000	33.33%

An interested party or its duly authorized agent must submit a Letter of Intent ("LOI") to the PRIVACOM, stating such interested party's intention to participate in the Bidding of the Shares and indicating such interested party's or agent's full name, address, telephone and fax number, and the name of its principal contact person. The LOI must be signed by the interested party's or the agent's authorized representative.

LOIs may be submitted to the PRIVACOM beginning 9:00 a.m. on 20 September 2007 but in any event no later than 12:00 noon on 24 September 2007. Only an interested party that, on its own or through its agent, submits a LOI ("Prospective Bidder") by this deadline shall be allowed to participate further as a bidder in the Bidding. Upon submission of the LOI, the PRIVACOM shall furnish the Prospective Bidders the initial pre-qualification guidelines as well as the form of the Confidentiality Agreement and Undertaking.

Beginning on 21 September 2007, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., the Bidding Rules & Procedures shall be made available by PRIVACOM to Prospective Bidders.

A pre-bid conference for Prospective Bidders shall be held at 2:00 p.m. on 24 September 2007 at the 7th Floor, PNOC Mini-Theatre, PNOC Building VI, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

Prospective Bidders shall submit to the PRIVACOM on or before 5:00 p.m. on 05 October 2007 the initial pre-qualification requirements, including the duly executed Confidentiality Agreement and Undertaking, in order to be considered for pre-qualification. The PRIVACOM shall announce the Pre-qualified Bidders on or around 10 October 2007.

Upon payment by the Pre-qualified Bidder to PNOC of a non-refundable Participation Fee in the amount of Five Thousand U.S. Dollars (US$5,000.00) on 11 October 2007 and 12 October 2007, the Pre-qualified Bidder shall be furnished by the PRIVACOM with the Draft Transaction Documents, the Information Package and Due Diligence Procedures. Only Pre-qualified Bidders shall be given the opportunity to conduct due diligence on the Shares and on PNOC EDC which shall start no later than 15 October 2007, in accordance with the Due Diligence Procedures.

To allow the PRIVACOM an opportunity to qualify the Pre-qualified Bidders or any consortium as may be allowed to be formed in accordance with the Bidding Rules & Procedures ("Consortium"), each Pre-qualified Bidder or Consortium must submit the Final Qualification Documents as may be required by the PRIVACOM no later than 7:00 pm on 26 October 2007.

Pre-qualified Bidders and Consortia that pass the final qualification ("Qualified Bidders") must submit their Bids together with any other documents as may be required by the PRIVACOM on or before 9:00 a.m. on 21 November 2007 to the Chairman of the PRIVACOM, c/o Ms. Celia R. Tagaro, Ph.D., at the Ground Floor, PNOC Building VI, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

The PRIVACOM reserves the right to disqualify any party should it determine that any submission by such party is not accurate, truthful, complete, authentic, and/or compliant with the Bidding Rules & Procedures and any Supplemental Bid Bulletins issued in connection with the Bidding.

The PRIVACOM reserves the right to reject any and all LOIs, initial pre-qualification requirements, final qualification requirements, Bids and other documents required to be submitted in the course of the Bidding, or to declare a failure of Bidding, or not to proceed with the sale of the Shares, or to annul the Bidding at any time prior to the notice of award, or to waive any required formality in the Bids received or defects therein, or to accept such Bid as may be considered most advantageous to the government, without giving any reason therefor and without incurring any liability to the affected Bidders. PRIVACOM does not assume any obligation to compensate or indemnify parties for expenses or losses that they may incur in connection with the Bidding, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

The PRIVACOM reserves the right to change the schedule in relation to the Bidding and all other deadlines set by the PRIVACOM ("Bidding Schedule") without prior notice. Bidders shall be promptly notified of any change in the Bidding Schedule through a Supplemental Bid Bulletin. The PRIVACOM furthermore reserves the right to amend, revise, supplement, modify, or clarify the Bidding Rules & Procedures through Supplemental Bid Bulletins. Upon the issuance of a Supplemental Bid Bulletin, the same shall automatically be incorporated into and made an integral part of the Bidding Rules & Procedures.

Unless otherwise expressly specified in writing, all references to times and dates above shall refer to Manila time. Should any of the dates fall on a holiday, the date or deadline shall be extended to the same time on the next succeeding Business Day. Unless otherwise indicated, the venue of all of the above activities shall be at the office of the PRIVACOM at the Ground Floor, PNOC Building VI, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

LOIs, inquiries and clarifications pursuant to this invitation to pre-qualify and to bid shall be addressed and submitted to:

Chairman of the PRIVACOM
c/o Ms. Celia Tagaro, Ph.D.
PRIVACOM Secretariat
Ground Floor, PNOC Building VI Energy Center, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City Tel. No. (632) 840 1442 Fax. No. (632) 840 1441 E-mail: crtagaro@pnoc.com.ph

(Sgd.) ANTONIO M. CAILAO
Chairman, PRIVACOM
President & CEO, PNOC

TRO issued against GMO rice product

THE QUEZON CITY REGIONAL Trial Court has issued a temporary restraining order on the application of Bayer Philippines Inc. to use its genetically modified rice LL62 for food, animal feed and processing.

According to the order, its petitioner, Greenpeace, contests that the GMO "has not been thoroughly studied as to its real impact on health and environment."

The TRO inhibits the Department of Agriculture and Bureau of Plant Industry from approving the application for GMO Liberty Link Rice 62.

Greenpeace filed the petition last Aug. 23, questioning the lack of public voice and public consultation on GMO approvals by the DA and BPI, particularly in the case of Bayer LL62's application.

The group further contends that "the approval process for GMOs in the country is unconstitutional, violating Article II, sections 16 and 17 and Article III, sec. 7 of the 1987 Constitution (right to health, right to a sound ecology, and right to information on matters of public concern, respectively)."

In a statement, Greenpeace Southeast Asia Genetic Engineering Campaigner Daniel Ocampo said they filed the petition "because this application will put our rice under further control of greedy corporate interests."

Ocampo said with this petition, "we are reminding the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Plant Industry to uphold their mandate to ensure that our rice supply is safe to the environment and human health."

"If the application is approved, the entry of GMO rice in our country will irrevocably alter the future of our most important staple food," he added.

Amy R. Remo

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Park Boulevard 2000, Baclaran,
Parañaque, Philippines
Phone 853-9999

Per DTI-NCR Permit No.4318, Series of 2007

Villar dares GMA to walk the talk on ZTE deal

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO having announced an apparent intention to honor the $329-million National Broadband Network deal with ZTE Corp., Senate President Manuel Villar yesterday challenged her to walk the talk.

"A lot of persons are involved in this anomaly, but I am not saying who. It is important that the government establish that it is really against corruption by canceling deals such as this," Villar said in an interview with dzXL radio. "If the administration is really decisive and fair, there shouldn't be deals like these."

Villar recalled that the controversial deal with Philippine International Air Terminals Co. Inc. (Piatco) to build and operate the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 was voided by the Supreme Court because of corruption and violation of the antidummy law.

"In the case of Piatco, the President said it was important to fight corruption, which was why she did not open [Naia 3]. But now it's different ... The $329 million is too much of a burden for our people. All our experts have stated that [another broadband project] is not needed, and all the experts say it is too expensive," he said.

Bad precedent

Villar warned that upholding the NBN deal could set a bad precedent.

"What if the President goes into [another] deal tainted by anomalies, and the government has to honor it because it upholds its commitments? Others will be encouraged to do the same because no one is getting punished. It's a different thing when someone gets punished," he said, adding:

"I believe that the deal should be junked because that big a contract should have been publicized and reviewed extensively—not like this, done in secret and the contract lost. We have become a laughingstock for others."

Senate hearing

Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano, chair of the committee on accountability of public officers and investigations, said the Senate would hold its first hearing on the NBN deal on Tuesday, with Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos and Jose de Venecia III invited to attend.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson told dzMM radio that he was convincing a still "unnamed witness" to testify against Abalos. He said the Senate was well within its rights to investigate the deal because a contract had been signed by Transportation and Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza in China.

VILLAR

Monetary Board

But Sen. Edgardo Angara said the document was not yet binding because it was merely a supplier contract and the more important financial contract had yet to be approved by pertinent state agencies.

He suggested that instead of investigating the contract, lawmakers should look into the accusations of bribery and how the deal was crafted.

But Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago told reporters that while the deal could be considered "a valid and effective contract," there was still a need for the Monetary Board to approve it "independent of this internecine warfare between the two parties involved."

"Any anomaly in government transactions will be subject to the jurisdiction of the Senate. It's just that we are not the proper agency tasked with ratification because this is not a treaty in the usual sense. It is, in fact, a monetary transaction, which, under the Constitution, needs the approval of the Monetary Board," she said.

NG PANGULO NG
PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo addresses the 70th anniversary of Women's Suffrage Philippines at the Philippine International Convention Center Friday. EDWIN BACASMAS

JDV's son bares threats

From page A1

De Venecia said in a earlier sworn statement that Abalos had attempted to bribe him with $10 million to back out of the NBN project.

He said the offer was during many meetings in Abalos' office at the Wack-Wack Golf and Country Club, of which Abalos is president, and at a meeting in a hotel in Shenzen, China.

De Venecia said Abalos had even told him, in a fit of rage, that he had tapped the businessman's phone.

'Stay abroad'

According to De Venecia, a threat was also relayed to him last week through his secretary.

He said a male caller had asked his secretary about his whereabouts. When told that De Venecia was abroad, the man reportedly said: "*Pakisabi kung nasa abroad siya, doon muna siya. Magpahinga muna siya* (If he is abroad, tell him he should stay there and cool it for the meantime)."

Asked why Mendoza would go after him, De Venecia said: "I don't know.

"He is the implementing agency [for the NBN project]. He's responsible for its implementation."

Asked whether Mendoza was also part of the supposed bribery or corruption surrounding the ZTE contract, the businessman said: "I can only say what I know. Secretary Mendoza never lobbied for ZTE in front of me."

He said he only knew that Mendoza and Abalos were "very good friends" and were "golfing buddies."

De Venecia said that except for one instance, Mendoza was not part of the meetings with Abalos in Wack-Wack or in Shenzen, when the Comelec chair supposedly egged him to back out of the project in order to clear the way for ZTE.

DE VENECIA III

MENDOZA

Earlier, De Venecia said he took the chance to speak with Mendoza about the ZTE deal sometime in March, when the secretary visited his father's house to request the Speaker to endorse a Mendoza son who was running in the 2007 elections.

He said this was after the incident when Abalos shouted invectives at him for what he supposedly told ZTE officials in phone conversations that Abalos had purportedly tapped.

According to De Venecia, Mendoza offered to arrange a reconciliation meeting between him and Abalos. Mendoza came for that meeting with Abalos a few days later in Wack-Wack.

Anticlimax

Mendoza has managed, with plenty of help from two administration lawmakers, to escape grilling at the House budget hearing on the NBN project.

Right at the outset, Mendoza said it would be "futile and embarrassing" for him to discuss the issue in view of the suits pending at the Supreme Court and the Ombudsman.

"Much as I wish to give my full cooperation and position on this matter, I regret that ... we in the DOTC are bound by the sub judice rule for pending cases," he told opposition Rep. Rufus Rodriguez on Thursday night.

Mendoza's refusal to talk about the deal cornered by China's ZTE Corp. was an anticlimax for Rodriguez and his fellow members of the minority bloc, who had waited all day for the "man of the hour."

The secretary did not appear until around 7:45 p.m., when the committee on appropriations had completed the preliminary hearing on the proposed 2008 budgets of the Departments of Foreign Affairs and of Trade and Industry.

Trade Secretary Peter Favila had earlier refused to discuss the NBN project, telling lawmakers that they should be quizzing Mendoza instead.

Favila and Mendoza were summoned by the House for a "question hour" on Wednesday. But Favila was purportedly barred by President Macapagal-Arroyo from testifying, and the chamber received no word from Mendoza.

'Basic facts'

Rodriguez assured Mendoza that the committee would not tackle the merits of the case. He said the questions would be limited to "basic facts," such as whether there was indeed a contract with ZTE for the NBN project.

"We will not discuss ... whether it is illegal or not. It's farthest from our mind," Rodriguez, a former dean of the San Sebastian College Law School, told Mendoza.

To which Mendoza replied: "The contract is part of the petition. My legal counsel was telling me that anything about the contract I should refrain from answering."

He said that if it was any consolation, his camp was preparing to request the Supreme Court to exempt him and his fellow respondents from the sub judice rule. He said the DOTC was willing to "explain and defend the concept, purpose and rationale of the NBN project not only before this august committee but also in other forums where clarification and transparency of the project will be required."

This prompted Rodriguez to retort: "Would you prefer that you meet the committee when you can already answer questions on the project?"

Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman rose to remind Rodriguez that there were "other members of the committee with questions relative to the budget of the [DOTC]."

'Premature apprehension'

From that point, Rodriguez had to contend with Lagman and Quirino Rep. Junie Cua, another administration stalwart, for an opportunity to grill Mendoza.

Cua is to replace Lagman as committee chair in the second half of the 14th Congress as part of a "power-sharing" scheme brokered by the Speaker.

Lagman reminded Rodriguez that according to the account of Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya, the NBN project had no allocation in the proposed P1.227-trillion budget for 2008.

"We have not provided any funding support for this project, and we don't intend to do so for 2008," he said.

Rodriguez expressed the fear that with the NBN project being part of an executive agreement with a Chinese firm, taxpayers might end up shouldering the cost by virtue of the "automatic debt servicing" in the annual budget.

Lagman replied: "Your apprehension is premature. There is no debt service to talk about."

Cua backed Lagman, reminding Rodriguez that the NBN project was still "several steps away from the appropriation process."

"This being the case, there is no budgetary implication to talk about," Cua said. "I would like to agree with the statement of the chair that it's premature [to talk about budgetary implications and debt servicing]."

Soon after a rebuffed Rodriguez rested his case, Cua approached him and squeezed his shoulder. *With a report from Riza T. Olchondra*

US ambassador stresses need for transparency

By Christine O. Avendaño

US AMBASSADOR KRISTIE Kenney yesterday stressed the need for transparency in business transactions, saying this had always been the position taken by the United States.

Kenney made the statement when asked what she thought of how the National Broadband Network (NBN) controversy had unfolded despite her earlier appeal to the Arroyo administration not to hastily enter into an agreement with China's ZTE Corp.

Speaking with reporters after a ceremony marking the 70th anniversary of Women's Suffrage Philippines at the Philippine International Convention Center, which was also attended by President Macapagal-Arroyo, Kenney tried to dodge questions about her April 20 letter to then Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri.

"Conversations and letters are something private," she said. "But we always encourage transparency [in] business dealings so that dealings are conducted in an open and transparent manner and benefit all."

She added: "Other than that, I am not going to comment."

American interest

Kenney wrote Neri on the day Ms Arroyo flew to Boao, China, to witness the signing of the $329-million contract with ZTE.

In her letter, she expressed the US government's interest in the NBN project and asked the Arroyo administration to "take time to carefully review and consider the multiple expressions of interest that had been submitted, including those involving American corporations."

"As in all other government procurement projects, we believe open competition and transparency are in the best interest of all," she said.

Ms Arroyo's economic managers said the other day that there was still no contract for the NBN project.

They said the Philippines had only signed a supplier's agreement with ZTE, which did not have the effect of an executive agreement.

They said that for the contract to have such an effect, a loan agreement between the Philippine and Chinese governments should be firmed up.

Ridiculous, says Abalos of wiretap rap

ABALOS

From page A1

Chinese firm ZTE Corp.—which won the contract—that Abalos was the biggest obstacle to the deal because of his alleged demand for a kickback.

De Venecia said it was then that Abalos told him that he (Abalos) had wiretapped his conversations with ZTE officials.

ZTE eventually bagged the NBN deal, beating Amsterdam Holdings Inc., where De Venecia is a majority shareholder.

"I find it ridiculous. Wiretapping?" Abalos said in a phone interview. "You know better than that. What are my qualifications? He makes himself incredible."

Abalos deplored the series of allegations against him by De Venecia and other people, saying these were hard to believe.

De Venecia's motives

"First, my sexual prowess. And then my influence with cabinet officials. And now this," he said.

Rep. Carlos Padilla has accused a Comelec official—whom a newspaper columnist claimed was Abalos—of receiving sexual favors in return for brokering the NBN deal between the Philippine government and ZTE.

Asked what he thought was De Venecia's intention in coming out with his affidavit, Abalos said he did not know.

"I don't want to speculate. I don't like speculations. I don't know his motives," he said.

Appeal to public and media

The GMA news website quoted radio station dzEC as reporting that Abalos said De Venecia could have been sore at him after AHI was bumped off the deal.

According to Abalos, De Venecia's statements show people what kind of a man De Venecia is. He also said De Venecia's statements should be scrutinized.

"I am appealing to the public and the media to be very careful with his statements," he said.

Abalos also said he remained unaffected by De Venecia's claims but that his family, especially his wife, was taking the attacks hard.

Hello, Garci scandal

"I can take it in stride. But my wife could not sleep. She doesn't want to read the papers anymore. I understand I'm the headline again of your paper," he said.

The Comelec was embroiled in a previous wiretapping controversy after one of its officials, former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano, was linked to the so-called "Hello, Garci" tape scandal.

The tape supposedly contained a recording of phone conversations between Garcillano and President Macapagal-Arroyo on rigging the results of the 2004 presidential election.

Ms Arroyo and Garcillano have denied cheating in the election.

Following the uproar generated by the Garci tape, Abalos said he would log all calls from public officials that he would get during the May 2007 midterm elections.

Senators not impressed on Jpepa

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

FINANCE AND TRADE OFFICIALS failed to impress senators on what the Philippines would gain in economic benefits if the Senate ratifies the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (Jpepa), as public hearings into the proposed free trade agreement opened yesterday.

The chairs of the committees handling the hearings said they were unimpressed by the government's presentation of potential Japanese foreign direct investments (FDIs) for the next three years.

"It appears that the government officials concerned are having a hard time justifying concurrence with Jpepa," said Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, chair of the foreign relations committee which is taking the lead in the hearings.

Skeptical

She said she and the other senators who sat at the three-hour hearing were "very skeptical" about the government's justification for entering into the treaty.

"The basic question is, what will the Philippines gain by signing the treaty in [exchange for the] concessions we are making. This was not clear this morning," she said.

Sen. Manuel Roxas II, chair of the trade and commerce committee, said the Senate would have rejected the treaty based on what he heard yesterday.

"I am underwhelmed by the presentation of the government... They were not able to show what the benefits to us are compared to the gains Japan would get. They are making purely technical assumptions," he said.

The Department of Trade and Industry, which headed the treaty negotiations with Japan, said the country would gain about P222 billion in Japanese FDIs from 2007 to 2010 if the Jpepa is ratified.

It also claimed that the investments would result in 330,000 jobs and P32 billion in tax revenues.

Theoretical

But Roxas said the projected increase in investments was "theoretical."

"With or without the treaty, they've been coming here to invest... So just because we have a treaty doesn't mean we'll have this money coming into the country," he said.

He said he found it "problematic" that under the treaty, the Philippines agreed to grant "national treatment" to Japanese investors, treating them like natural-born Filipino businessmen.

Santiago said the government officials failed to show whether the country would gain more if it agrees to the treaty, since Japan is already the country's biggest source of foreign investments, the second biggest trading partner and largest source of official development assistance (ODA).

When questioned by Sen. Richard Gordon, Trade Undersecretary Elmer Hernandez admitted their projected increase in Japanese investments were based on investment "leads" or "missions" where Japanese investors are invited to invest.

Gordon said based on his experience as former chair of the Subic Bay Management Authority (SBMA), "very few" pledges to invest actually materialize.

The senators found the anti-Jpepa group to be better prepared than the government officials.

Given up too much

Lawyer Golda Benjamin, spokesperson of the Junk Jpepa Coalition, said the country "has given up too much" compared to other countries in the region that have entered into economic partnership agreements with Japan.

She claimed that under the treaty, the country gave up the right to compel Japanese investors to transfer technology and to hire a minimum number of local workers.

Plant more 'malunggay,' gov't urged

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

FOLLOWING THE RECENT DISCOVERY of malunggay's power in boosting male potency, Sen. Loren Legada is urging the government to make horse radish among its priority crop for propagation.

Legarda, who credits her morning habit of taking malunggay soup for her youthful good looks, said: "The Department of Agriculture and the Department of Science and Technology should quickly draw up a plan to purposely encourage the cultivation and use of malunggay. Congress can then support the plan with an extra budget, if necessary."

Legarda said the Department of Education should also integrate malunggay in the government's feeding program for school children.

"This is an inexpensive way for us to enrich the household diet as well as the school-feeding program, and put in check pervasive malnutrition among children," she added.

"Malunggay can be planted and grown just about anywhere, is cheap and in some areas, even free."

Interest in malunggay has shot up after a study by experts from the Bureau of Plant Industry showed that a steady diet of this fruit boosts the sperm count of men which improves their chances of fertilizing an egg.

Younger-looking

For women, Legarda said that malunggay lead to youthful-looking skin as it improves female skin tone.

Malunggay was also found to be rich in vitamins C and A, iron, and high density lipoprotein or good cholesterol.

Citing the BPI report, Legarda said that malunggay leaves, ounce for ounce, contain the calcium equivalent of four glasses of milk, the vitamin C of seven oranges, the potassium of three bananas, three times the iron of spinach, four times the vitamin A in carrots and two times the protein in milk.

Malunggay, or "Moringa" in English, is a popular tree that grows in the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, India, West Africa, and most recently, in the US. Many Asians consume both the leaves and fruits of the tree, much like spinach and asparagus.

The study showed that malunggay also helps purify water.

Search on for Young Market Masters

THE SEARCH FOR THE BEST FILIPINO marketers and entrepreneurs who can serve as role models to the youth has been launched.

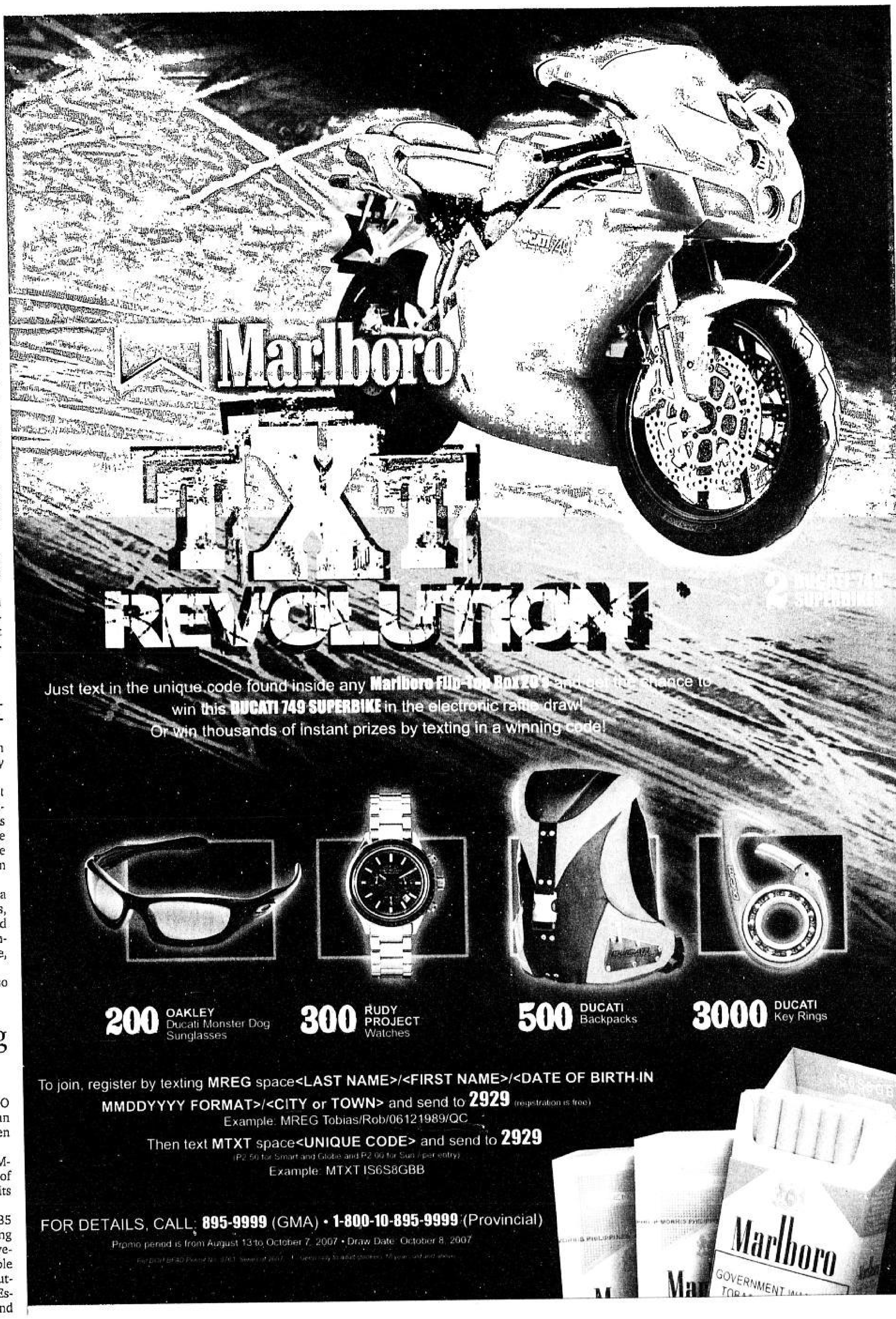
The Young Market Masters Awards (YMMA), organized as an advocacy project of Mansmith and Fielders Inc., is now on its third year.

It seeks to recognize achievers aged 35 years and below, who excel in marketing and entrepreneurship, and whose achievements encourage and inspire young people to be "innovative entrepreneurs and outstanding brand builders," said Chiqui Escareal-Go, president of Mansmith and Fielders.

Among the categories included in the search are account management, advocacy marketing, brand management, business development, customer development, marketing communication, and events, promotional and entrepreneurial marketing.

Entries will be accepted until Oct. 30. The application form may be downloaded or filled out online at www.youngmarketmasters.com. Self-nominations are accepted.

For inquiries, call Alice or Gail at 722-2318, 727-7142 or 0918-811-6888, e-mail info@mansmith.net or visit www.mansmith.net.



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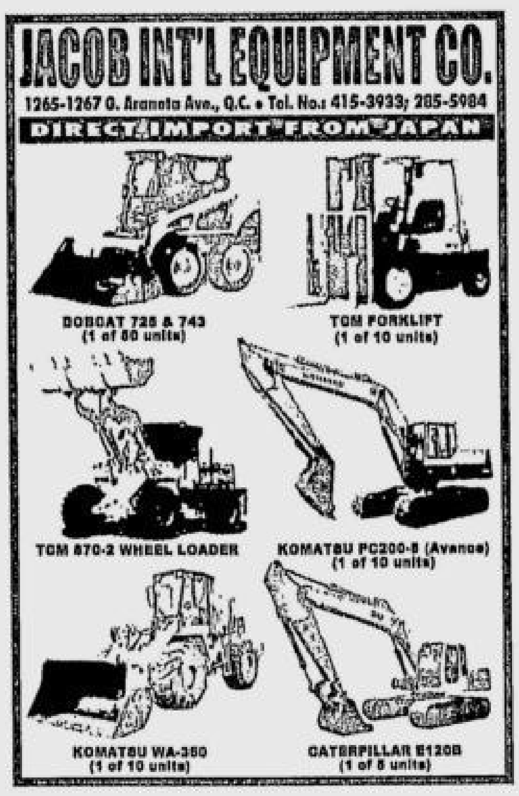


Rustom's gay …

From page A1

The moment was extra special, he said, because the trophy was presented to him by his brother, Robin Padilla, a previous winner of the same award for "La Visa Loca."

After announcing that Rustom had won in a tie with veteran actor Mark Gil—who was cited for his portrayal of a disillusioned tabloid reporter in the independent film "Rotonda"—Robin promptly approached his brother and hugged him.

"I didn't know that Robin would be the presenter," Rustom said. "In fact, I didn't know he was here. I can't wait to see my family." Rustom admitted that he had not spoken with his mother, former actress Eva Cariño, for quite a while. He had been skipping family reunions, he added, to avoid "confrontations."

GINA Pareño wins best actress for "Kubrador." ROMY HOMILLADA

RUSTOM Padilla and Mark Gil tie for Urian best actor. ROMY HOMILLADA

Surprise party

Rustom was visibly elated when a female reporter told him about Robin announcing that their family was planning a "surprise" to celebrate the victory. It is Rustom's first-ever acting trophy.

It is also Gil's first Urian Best Actor award, although he has won for supporting roles in the past, including the acclaimed 1982 film, "Palipat-lipat, Papalit-palit."

Gil's son, Sid Lucero, was also a nominee for Best Actor, as star of the independent film, "Donsol." Other nominees in the category were Ryan Agoncillo for "Kasal, Kasali, Kasalo," Alchris Galura for "Batad sa Paang Palay," Mario Magallona for "Rekados" and Jett Pangan for "Tulad ng Dati."

The internationally acclaimed "Kubrador" took a total of five trophies—Best Picture, Best Actress for Gina Pareño, Best Director for Jeffrey Jeturian, Best Production Design for Leo Abaya and Best Cinematography for Roberto Yñiguez.

Prestigious win

Pareño's win hardly came as a surprise—she had won the same recognition in several international film festivals. However, Pareño told the INQUIRER that this one, also her first Urian, was special. "This is prestigious. *Kaya ako'y nagagalak na naipanalo ko ito kahit mas matanda pa ang* career *ko sa* Urian (I'm glad I got this, even though my career is older than the Urian)."

Other Best Actress nominees were Jonalyn Abong for "Manoro," Cherry Pie Picache and Angel Aquino for "Kaleldo," Andrea del Rosario and Mylene Dizon for "Rome and Juliet," Judy Ann Santos for "Kasal, Kasali, Kasalo," and Maricel Soriano for "Inang Yaya."

"A director's dream" was how Best Director winner Jeffrey Jeturian described Pareño's performance in "Kubrador" as a jueteng collector. He told the INQUIRER that "Kubrador's" victory was also for all independent filmmakers.

Indeed, several other independent films were recognized in this year's awards:

Best screenplay

Chris Violago and Connie Macatuno won Best Screenplay for "Rome and Juliet," a fresh take on the travails of lesbian relationships. John Torres bagged the Best Editing plum for "Todo Todo Teros," an intriguing story of terrorism and global security as they affect ordinary people's lives. Ronald de Asis took the Best Sound trophy for "Tulad ng Dati," a peek into the rise of one of the country's leading rock bands, The Dawn.

The independent circuit likewise became the route for Rafael Rossell to reach his own career milestone. He won Best Supporting Actor for "Rome and Juliet," over the likes of Soliman Cruz ("Kasal, Kasali, Kasalo"), Domingo Landicho ("Kubrador"), Alan Paule and Lauren Novero ("Kaleldo"), Epy Quizon ("Rotonda"), Ping Medina ("Tulad ng Dati") and Archie Adamos ("Raket ni Nanay").

Meryll Soriano was proclaimed Best Supporting Actress for the film "Rotonda." She wasn't around to receive the award, as she had just given birth. Her uncle, Mel Martinez, went up the stage in her behalf. Soriano was up against Gloria Diaz and Gina Pareño ("Kasal, Kasali, Kasalo"), Pops Fernandez ("Zsa Zsa Zaturnnah Ze Moveeh"), Agot Isidro ("Tulad ng Dati"), Liza Lorena and Tala Santos ("Inang Yaya") and Tessie Tomas ("Rome and Juliet").

This year's Natatanging Gawad Urian Award was bestowed on Marichu Vera-Perez Maceda for her outstanding contributions to the local film industry.

'Inday' Ilagan, 75

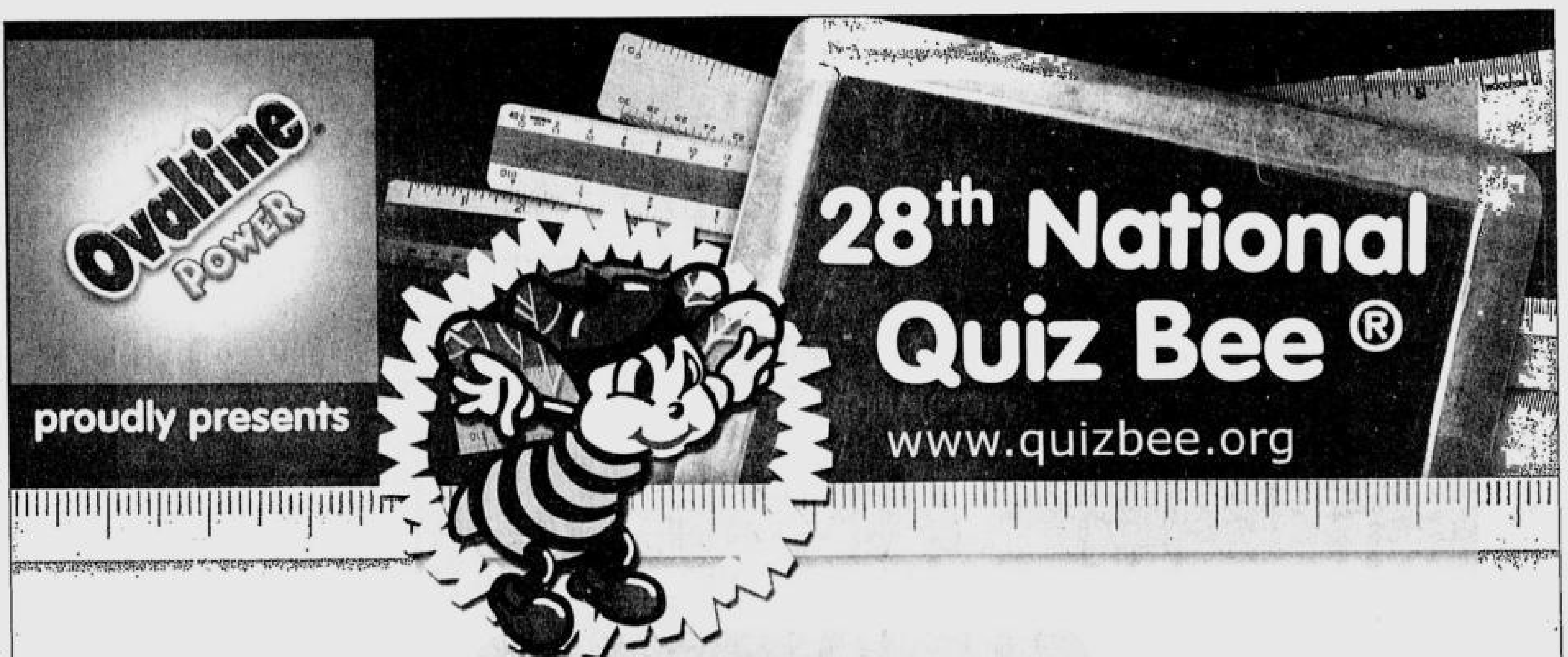
MA CELINA "INDAY" JAVELLANA ILAGAN of Davao City died on Sept. 12, 2007 at the age of 75.

She is the mother of Inquirer Business columnist Joji Ilagan-Bian.

She is survived by her children Joji and George, Atty. Edgar and Juliet, Dr. Brian and Lalay, Marie and Jonathan, Ma. Bella Socorro and Dennis; and grandchildren.

Her remains lie in state at Cosmopolitan Funeral Homes, J. Camus Street, Davao City.

Interment is on Sept. 18, 2007 at the Davao Memorial Park, Matina, Davao City after a 1 p.m. Mass at the San Pablo Church, Juna Subdivision, Davao City.



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Robinsons Place — Quezon City & Makati Schools Sat, Sept. 15, 2007
SM Southmall Las Piñas — Muntinlupa, Taguig, Pateros, Parañaque & Las Piñas Schools Sat, Sept. 29, 2007
Robinsons Galleria — Pasig, Mandaluyong, Marikina & San Juan City Schools Sat, Oct. 13, 2007
SM Valenzuela — Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas & Valenzuela City Schools Sat, Oct. 20, 2007
SM San Lazaro — METRO MANILA REGIONAL FINALS Saturday NOV. 17, 2007

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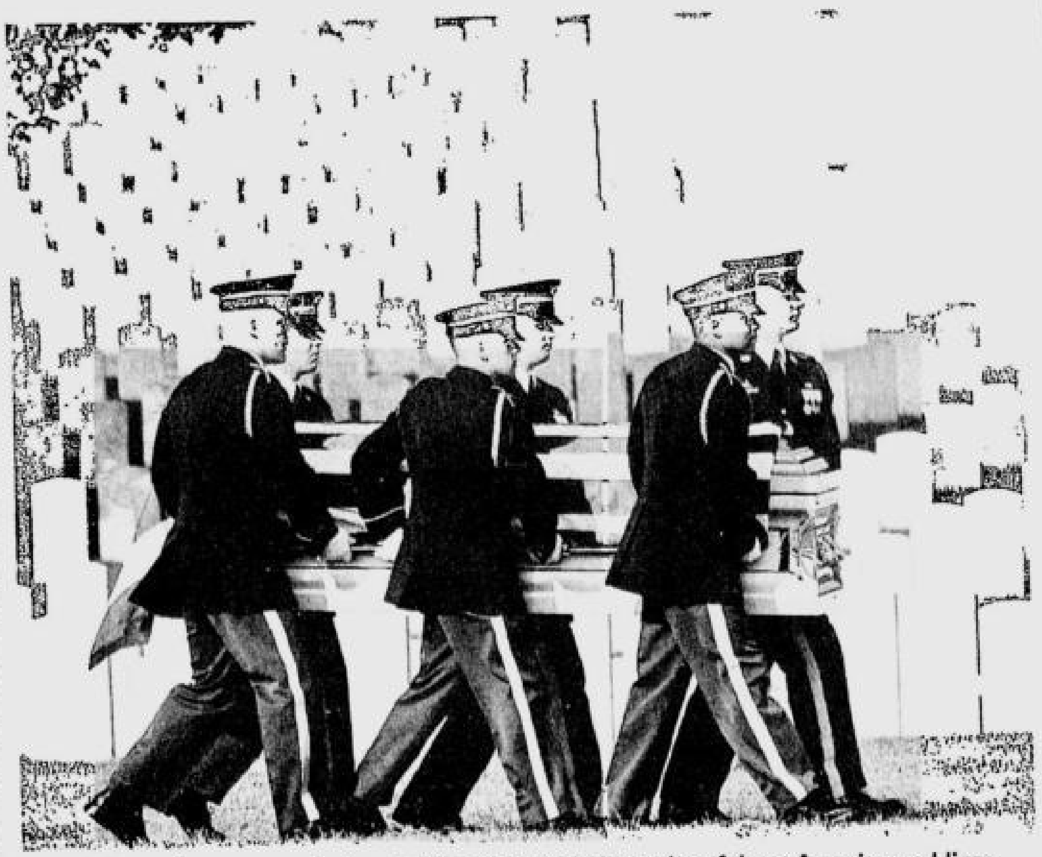

HONOR guards carry a casket containing the mingled remains of three American soldiers who died in Iraq during a group burial at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia on Thursday. REUTERS

Bush orders partial pullout of US troops

From page A1

we can begin seeing troops come home," he said in a prime-time televised speech. "The more successful we are, the more American troops can return home."

The speech was the first time since the war began four and a half years ago that Bush outlined a plan for troop reductions, to bring levels down from the current high of 169,000. He held out the prospect of more reductions but committed only to a plan that would withdraw by next July the additional combat units he ordered there in January.

PRESIDENT BUSH pauses in the Oval Office shortly after addressing his country on his strategy for Iraq on Thursday at the White House. AP

Insisting the unpopular war could still be won, Bush said whoever succeeded him at the White House would likely inherit the conflict and warned against giving up on a fledgling ally that was "fighting for its survival."

With most public opinion polls showing the US public is opposed two-to-one to his strategy, and his Democratic foes clamoring for a withdrawal, Bush defiantly said he would build "an enduring relationship" with Iraq.

Iraqi leaders "understand that their success will require US political, economic and security engagement that extends beyond my presidency," said Bush, whose term ends in January 2009.

Enduring ties

"These Iraqi leaders have asked for an enduring relationship with America. And we are ready to begin building that relationship in a way that protects our interests in the region and requires many 'fewer American troops," he said.

The president said that he had accepted advice from the US commander in Iraq, Gen. David Petraeus, that he should bring some 5,700 troops home by Christmas and a total of 21,500 combat troops out by mid-2008.

That would leave about 130,000 troops in Iraq, roughly the number in December 2006, one month before he escalated US force levels in a thus-far failed effort to give Iraq's leaders room to reach key political compromises.

Bush also bluntly acknowledged he was not satisfied with the pace of Iraqi political reforms that Washington viewed as critical to forging national unity and quelling sectarian violence and urged leaders in Baghdad to do more.

"The government has not met its own legislative benchmarks," said Bush, who directed a message to Iraq's people that "you must demand that your leaders make the tough choices needed to achieve reconciliation."

And he warned that "efforts by Iran and Syria to undermine that government must end," while predicting that "a free Iraq will counter the destructive ambitions of Iran," which he accuses of trying to develop nuclear weapons.

Democratic opposition

The president's plan came as the US Congress was poised to take up Democratic efforts to end the war and as presidential contenders faced tough questions on what they would do if elected in November 2008.

Democratic Sen. Jack Reed, giving his party's response, said it was "time to change course" and urged support for "a plan to responsibly and rapidly begin a reduction of our troops in Iraq."

Democrats lack the votes to set a timetable for ending the war, but hope to secure Republican support to limit the US role in Iraq to battling insurgents and Islamic militants, training the Iraqi army and protecting US personnel and installations.

They also hope to ensure that troops spend as much time at home as they do deployed in the war zone—an apparent bid to limit the number of troops available for deployment.

Democrats vying to succeed Bush swiftly criticized his announcement.

"I continue to implore the president to change course, bring our troops home faster, and end this war responsibly as soon as possible," said Sen. Hillary Clinton, the Democratic Party's front-runner.

Republican backing

Republican leaders defended the president's strategy.

"Congress is faced with a stark choice: either rally behind the proven, responsible strategy set forth by General Petraeus and bring our troops home after victory, or demand an irresponsible, precipitous withdrawal that will force our troops to leave in defeat," said House Republican Minority Leader John Boehner, who has just visited Iraq.

Bush's announcement came after two days of testimony by Petraeus and the US ambassador in Baghdad, Ryan Crocker, before the White House delivers to Congress a progress report on the war on Friday.

Petraeus acknowledged in testimony to lawmakers that the draw-down reflected the end of the "surge" Bush ordered in January, but White House officials have couched it as the natural response to "progress" in Iraq.

"We've got a long way to go. It's very hard. We're realistic about it," Bush spokeswoman Dana Perino said.

Bush made only a passing reference to a setback to US efforts—the bombing that killed a top Iraqi Sunni sheikh, Sattar Abu Reesha, who spearheaded a campaign against al-Qaida in his restive home province of Anbar.

"In response, a fellow Sunni leader declared: 'We are determined to strike back and continue our work.' And as they do, they can count on the continued support of the United States," he said. AFP, NYT

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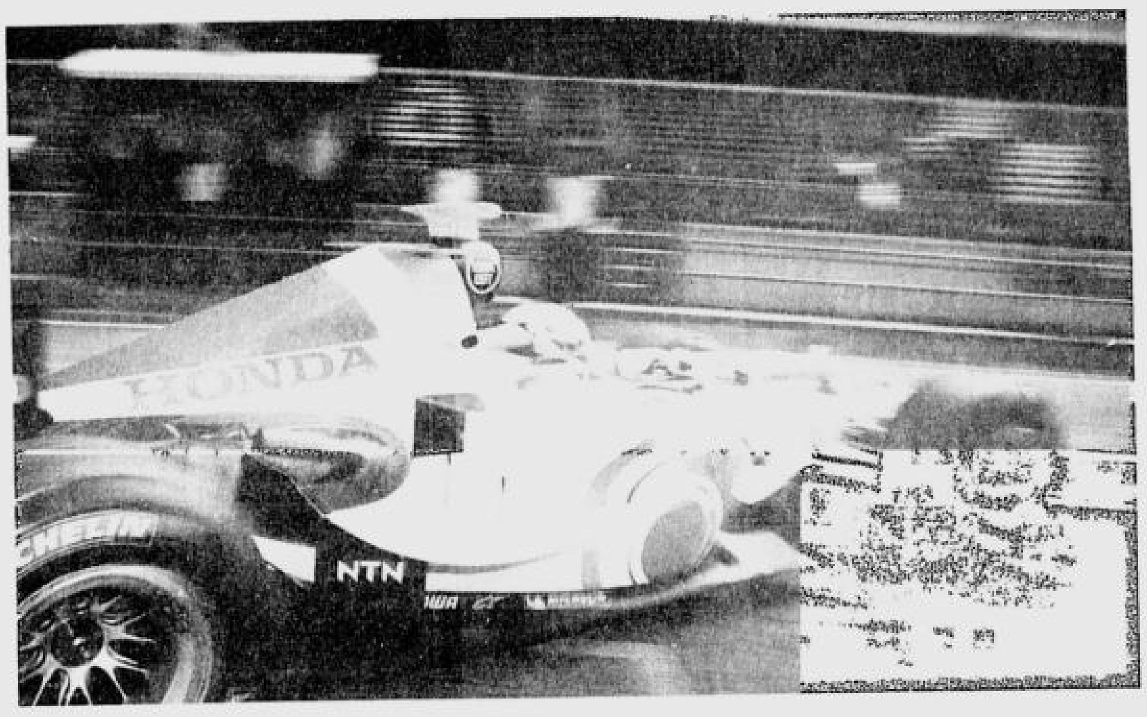

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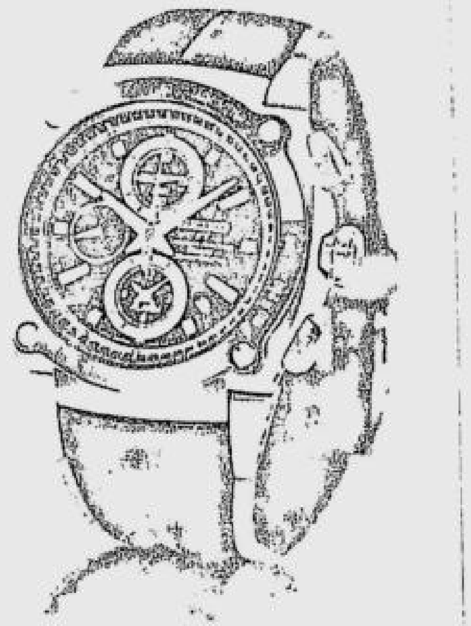

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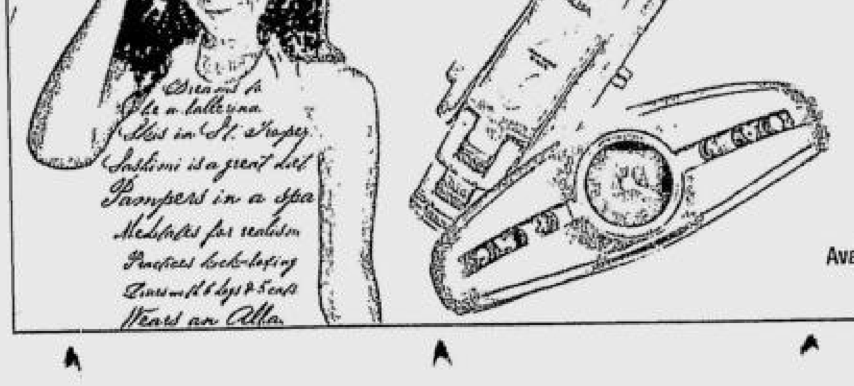

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Joma on Dutch jail: I felt like living in a toilet

From page A1

Netherlands, committed the offenses he is charged with, in deliberate and close cooperation with the perpetrators in the Philippines."

The court decision does not preclude him from being prosecuted on murder charges. The court only rules on the request to keep someone in custody, while it is the public prosecutor's office that decides on whether or not to prosecute.

"My cell was 3.5 meters long by 2.5 meters wide. It was 3.5 meters high. It was cramped. I felt like living in a toilet," Sison told Manila reporters in a phone-patch interview.

Reminiscent of martial law

He said the solitary confinement was broken only by five hours of interrogation every day.

"During my confinement, I remembered those five years that I was placed in solitary confinement under military custody [during martial law]," he said.

The phone-patch interview with Sison took place at the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) headquarters in Quezon City.

Sison was accused of ordering the killings of Romulo Kintanar in January 2003 and Arturo Tabara, along with his son-in-law Stephen Ong, in September 2004 in Quezon City.

He said these were "trumped-up charges."

With his release, Sison said he gained "some confidence" in the Dutch legal system.

"I have the opportunity to prove my innocence and continue to benefit from fair play. I feel somehow vindicated in choosing the Netherlands as my place of refuge from persecution in the Philippines," he said.

Kintanar's widow

Sison said he was released because the prosecution failed to provide "direct evidence" linking him to the killings and said he was confident the case against him would be thrown out by the court.

He also said he could file countercharges against the Dutch authorities over his illegal arrest once his case was over.

Sison has protested against his inclusion on the terror lists of the United States and some European countries.

Kintanar's widow, Joy, sounded unfazed by the Dutch court's action.

"I understand the battle will not be easy," she said in a text message. "The case against Joma continues and I can wait for the verdict no matter how long and hard it takes. The rule of law, truth and justice must prevail in the end."

Not yet off the hook

Wim de Bruin, spokesperson for the national prosecutor's office in the Netherlands, said Sison was not yet off the hook.

De Bruin said the decision of the court simply meant that there was no reason to further keep Sison in police custody.

"For the prosecutor's office, the investigation will continue. Sison is still a suspect," De Bruin said.

But for now, "he is free to go wherever he wants to go," he said.

A Dutch court official who spoke to the INQUIRER on the phone on condition of anonymity said the "in camera" decision merely focused on the question of whether there was sufficient evidence to keep Sison in detention beyond 14 days.

Respected legal system

"In camera merely rules if it's right to keep someone in detention without looking at the evidence," the official said.

Asked for comment on the Dutch court's decision, US Ambassador to the Philippines Kristie Kenney said: "The Dutch have a very well respected legal judicial system and it cooperates so well with Philippine authorities. I think we'll let them sort out what this means and what next steps to take."

Talking on ANC network, National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales said: "What's happening in the Netherlands is .. purely a Dutch initiative."

"It's too early for us to make judgment as to what is happening there because the process i continuing," Gonzales said.

The military said it woul continue to strengthen its cas that Sison that had ordered th killings of his two rivals.

Sison's release "does not remove the fact that the communist leadership knows somethin about their purging operations, said Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarr Armed Forces spokesperson.

The chief of the Philippin National Police's Directorate fo Operations, Director Wilfred Garcia, said they were sa dened by the release of Siso "But we respect the decision

SISON is welcomed by compatriots and supporters at his headquarters in Utrecht Thursday. REUTERS

JOSE MA. Sison embraces his wife Julie de Lima shortly after his release from prison Thursday in The Hague. REUTERS

the Dutch [court]," he said.

Different standards

Garcia also said: "The Dutch authorities might not have seen that there was a deliberate action by Joma in ordering the killings. Their standards or elements of crime are different."

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) lauded the release of Sison.

In a statement, communist spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said: "The web of lies that they tried to weave against Ka Joma was so utterly depraved and incredulous that it failed to convince the Dutch judges."

In a rally in Manila, some 300 members of the militant Anakbayan and League of the Filipino Students hailed the release of Sison.

The demonstrators gathered in front of the University of Sto. Tomas before marching to Liwasang Bonifacio.

"Professor Sison's release is a victory for all freedom-loving youths and the national democratic movement as a whole," they said in a statement. *With reports from Cynthia D. Balana, Christine O. Avendano, Nikko Dizon, Alcuin Papa, Tina G. Santos, Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon and AFP*

Sison: Reds ready to resume talks if …

AMSTERDAM—LEFT-WING rebels in the Philippines are ready to lay down their arms and resume peace talks only if its government agrees to wide-ranging reforms, their self-exiled leader in the Netherlands said on Thursday.

"If they want a ceasefire, we should have a short agreement on principles on just 10 points," Jose Maria Sison, the founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines, told Reuters in an interview.

He said the proposals include land reform, tackling bureaucratic and military corruption, canceling the Philippine foreign debt and giving minority groups proportionate representation in government and institutions.

The New People's Army (NPA) has waged a protracted rebellion since 1969, slowing growth in the rural areas of one of the poorest countries in Southeast Asia.

Peace talks, brokered by Norway, collapsed in August 2004 when the United States and some Western European states put the NPA and Sison on terrorism blacklists.

"[The Philippine government] should adopt social and economic reforms before hostilities can end," said Sison.

"I have nothing to do with any murder. I will conduct my legal defense and further clear my name," said Sison.

Referring to the Arroyo administration's offer of amnesty for rebels, Sison said: "It is a show." *Reuters*

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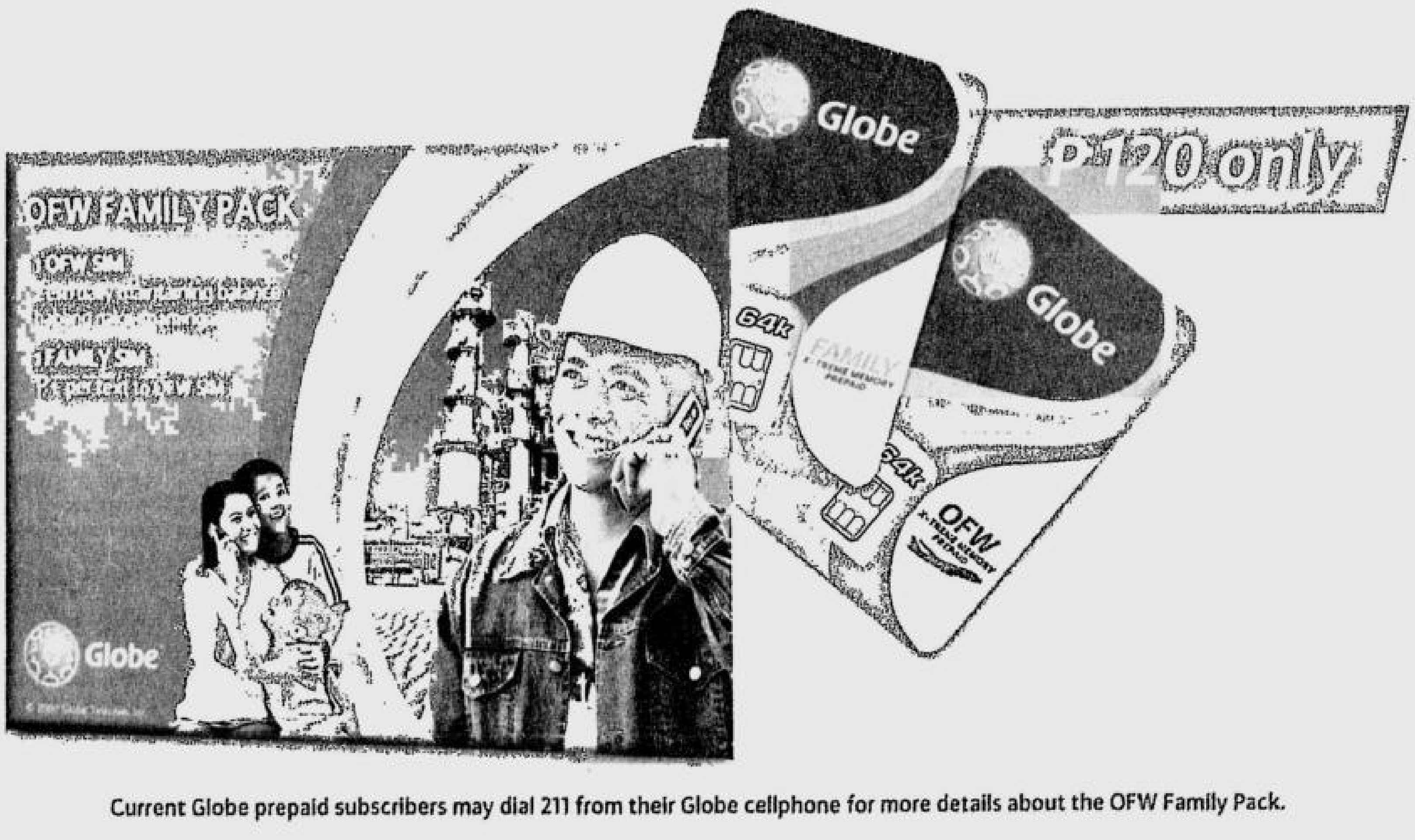

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Stickup

EDITORIAL

ON THE SAME DAY THAT THE SANDIGANBAYAN ended the trial of the century by sentencing her predecessor, Joseph Estrada, to life in prison for plunder, President Macapagal-Arroyo announced the creation of a new body to help curb graft and corruption in government. The President told the Bishops-Ulama Conference in Malacañang Wednesday that she had created the Procurement Transparency Group to monitor procurement for public projects. The inter-agency body, chaired by the Department of Budget and Management, will have representatives from civil society. It will monitor procurement biddings and report anomalies to agency heads as well as the Office of the Ombudsman and the Commission on Audit. Its main purpose is "to ensure transparency and good governance in our massive public investments," Ms Arroyo said. A separate group will "also harness civil society and the private sector in ensuring that public works projects serve the needs and objectives for which they are undertaken, and contract terms and timetables are complied with."

If the twin announcements were meant to signal a fresh resolve to combat graft in government, the President herself diluted the message with her other statements in the same forum. "We must be a government that honors contracts and agreements that go through the required processes, despite media attacks," she said. "We live by the rule of law." Later when asked by reporters if that policy included the ZTE contract to set up a national broadband network (NBN), Ms Arroyo reiterated that "as long as the contract goes through the required processes, we are required to comply" with its terms.

It was clear as day that she was referring to the $329-million contract with the Chinese firm ZTE. No other contract, whether involving foreign or local governments or companies, has been the subject of so much "media attacks" in recent months. And "transparent" is the last thing anyone can say about that contract or the processes that went before and after it was signed—from the deliberations on the project to the negotiations and the decision to award it to ZTE.

To this day, top administration officials continue to dissemble and mislead the public about the NBN project and how ZTE bagged the contract. They cannot even agree if there is a contract or not. Some Cabinet officials say what has been signed is a memorandum of agreement or understanding, but others call it a contract. Commission on Higher Education Chair Romulo Neri, who used to head the National Economic and Development Authority, says there is a "supplier's contract" but it is only a "prospective contract." If that means it is not the real thing, then why did Transportation and Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza sign it? And why did the President have to leave her husband, who had just undergone a delicate operation, to witness the signing in Boao, China? If the contract is "prospective," it is probably because the plans and specifications are not spelled out so that no one can tell exactly what the country is getting for $329 million or if that would be the final price.

When pressed for answers, most Cabinet members point to Mendoza, saying the NBN is his baby and he knows it best. But Mendoza refuses to make the contract public and he doesn't want to talk—not to the press, not to the members of Congress. The only talking he has done recently was to the Cabinet where he supposedly explained the project in detail, including how it would save the government billions of pesos a year.

Funny that Mendoza bothered to do that. It was like preaching to the converted or at least to those who must act like true believers, given the President's keen interest in seeing the NBN project through. But it is not the Cabinet that has been asking questions, it is the Filipino public. Does Mendoza think he owes it to the Cabinet to explain, but not to the Filipino people?

The Arroyo administration wants the Filipino people to approve a contract and pay for a project they know very little about, and it has the temerity to talk about transparency and good governance? In any other place, they would call this secret, rotten deal a stinking stickup.

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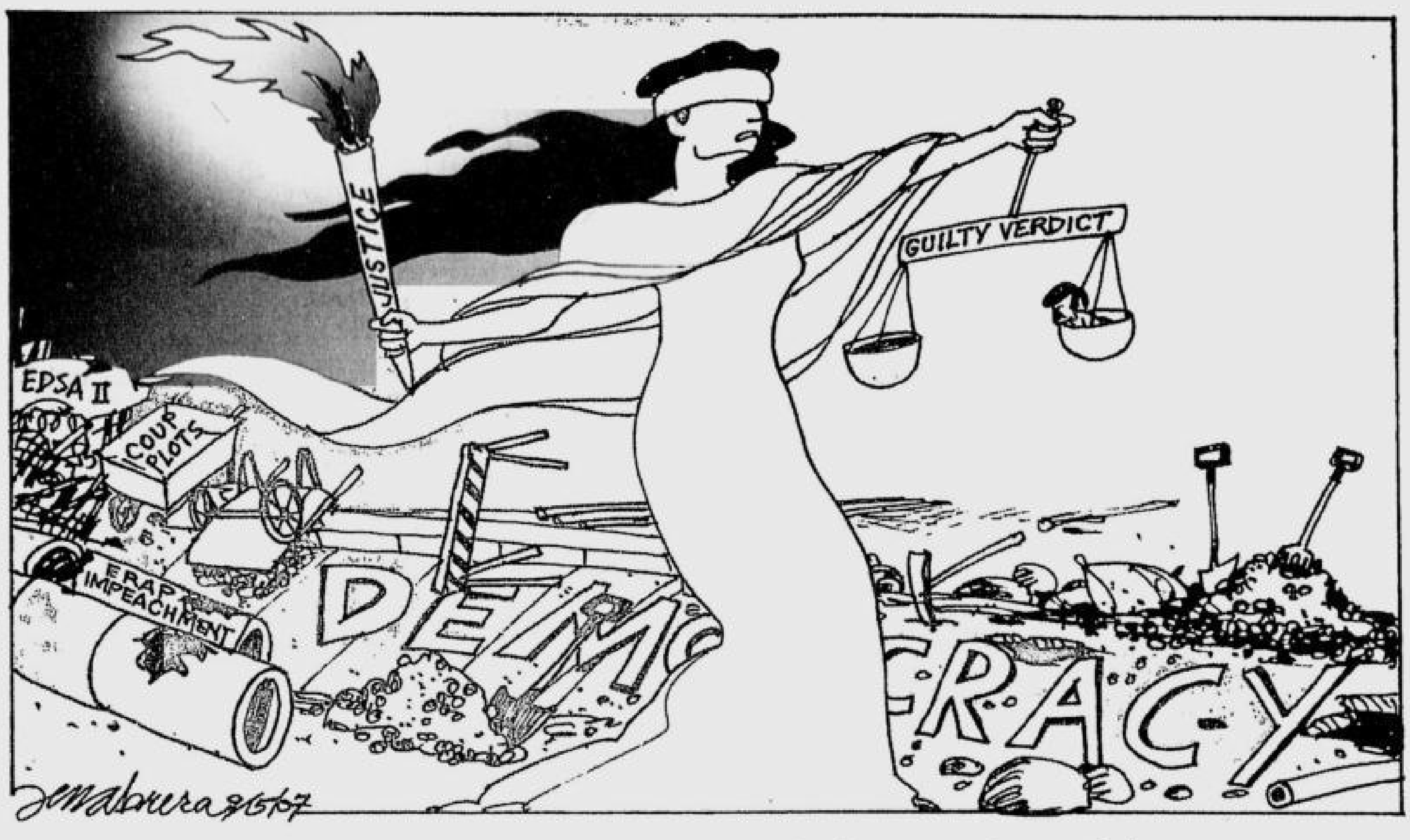

Erap's conviction and the rule of law

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

IT WAS INDEED A HISTORIC MOMENT IN our nation's life—the first time a former president has ever been convicted for an offense committed while he was in office. Because of the stature of the accused, we are led to think that, finally, the rule of law in our society has prevailed. I'm afraid that expectation is premature.

The legal system of any society is strengthened not so much when it succeeds in putting the high and mighty on trial, but when the law is applied consistently and predictably over time. We know there is rule of law when people have stable notions of what is legal and illegal, and know what to expect when laws are violated.

Does the Sandiganbayan verdict on the Joseph "Erap" Estrada plunder case affirm the rule of law? Or does it only affirm in the public mind the rule of politics over the law? Was Erap put on trial notwithstanding the fact that he was a former president, or was he charged and convicted precisely because there was a pressing need to justify removing him from the presidency? These are lingering doubts.

What lessons might incumbent President Macapagal-Arroyo, who was installed in the presidency after a civilian-military coup, draw from Erap's trial and conviction? Would it deter her from using the prerogatives of her office to commit similar offenses? Or would it merely warn her about the costs of being out of power? Would it make her more respectful of the law, or would it only stiffen her belief in the primacy of power?

Because Ms Arroyo's presidency has a fixed term, it is natural to think she has no choice but to relinquish her power in 2010. Let us assume there will be no constitutional revision to allow her to continue in office as president or as prime minister beyond 2010. Still, anyone in her position, who has come to power in a controversial way and has ruled callously over a bitterly divided country, may be expected to use her present powers to bind the future in order to protect herself and her family from the kind of fate that befell Erap. She has had all of six years to do that, and she has three more years to prepare for all possible contingencies. Are we to think that this President—who has faced repeated impeachment and coup attempts, recurrent calls for her resignation, and innumerable cases in the Supreme Court questioning the legality of her actions—will not lift a finger to protect herself against future suits? The way she has handled power throughout her presidency makes this unlikely.

The independence of the judiciary and the professional integrity of those who serve in the various agencies of government, including those in the police and the armed forces, are the minimum conditions needed to make the rule of law work in a democracy. Alas, under Ms Arroyo's watch, we have seen the most blatant undermining of these institutions by the executive. The assault on the autonomy of the investigative and prosecutorial offices of government, in particular, has been so brazen one wonders if those in charge are still in possession of their wits. Investigations, prosecutions, and preventive suspensions have been utterly selective. The pace and pattern in which they have been conducted manifest an astonishing partisanship often bordering on sheer malice and whim. The law has plainly been used as a weapon to threaten and punish political enemies.

The result of all this has been the consistent erosion of public trust in the country's legal system. One of the disturbing findings of a Social Weather Stations nationwide survey done just a week before the promulgation of the Erap verdict shows the level of public trust in the Sandiganbayan. Only 27 percent of those who were asked could say they had much trust in the Sandiganbayan's capacity to render a fair judgment on Erap's case. Twenty-three per cent said they had little trust in it, and 50 percent could give no opinion on the matter. This is a sad picture of the public's perception of the country's anti-graft court, and, no matter how one looks at it, it tells us why it is difficult to achieve a satisfactory legal closure to this case. But, we have no choice but to keep trying.

For, this is not the Sandiganbayan's fault. Theirs has been an extremely difficult task, and there is every reason to recognize the justices' efforts to maintain equanimity and keep a strictly legal perspective on such a complex case. If blame must be allocated, it has to be laid at the door of those who have done everything, directly and indirectly, to prevent the Court from focusing on the strictly legal merits of the case. I'm afraid they come from all sides of the political equation. If we keep subverting the autonomy of our judicial system, or promote a cynical view of our courts, how much justice can we expect when it is GMA's or Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos' turn to be tried?

Like all nations caught up in the vortex of global modernity, our social reality is becoming more complex every day. Despite our sometimes thoughtless attempts to undercut its operation, our society has evolved functional mechanisms for dealing with this complexity. The elaborate codes, norms, and procedures we find in the economy, in education, in the mass media, and indeed, in the legal system, all attest to our society's painful passage to modernity.

We must keep our society's compartments apart. It is right that Erap's lawyers are going to ask for a review of the Sandiganbayan decision's correctness and consistency in the application of legal norms. But we must resist using public opinion to impugn the validity of legal decisions. Doing so only further weakens the rule of law.

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Comments to public.lives@gmail.com

A shot in the arm

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

IN THE DAYS AND WEEKS LEADING TO 9/12 (the day the Sandiganbayan handed down its decision on the plunder case against Erap), speculation was rife as to what the decision would be. And no, there was no unanimity among the speculators—except, on one point. The common underlying assumption was that the decision would be politically based, meaning, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo would really be calling the shots, with the Sandiganbayan's Special Division merely justifying any decision she would tell them to make. So most of the discussion was not on the merits of the case but on whether an acquittal would be more beneficial (or less dangerous) to GMA than a conviction.

What was the reasoning on why an acquittal verdict would be forthcoming? Simply, it was that this was the only "safe" course for GMA. Because, if Erap was found guilty, GMA (1) would be under the gun from an opposition that would have an even bigger axe to grind, and would be more vicious in its retaliatory attacks; or (2) GMA could look forward to the same kind of harassment and charges from her successor when she stepped down in 2010. Essentially, an I-scratch-your-back-and-you-will-scratch-mine philosophy.

And what about the reasoning that a guilty verdict was to be expected? Simply, that this was the only "safe" course for GMA. Acquitting Erap would be tantamount to giving him and his supporters carte blanche to mount even more vicious attacks on her—an Erap unmuzzled posed a greater danger to the stability of the regime than an Erap under house arrest.

What was clear was that a stage was set: GMA would be blamed for whatever decision was handed down. It would be a politically no-win situation for her.

At breakfast (after the 6:15 a.m. Mass) on 9/12, I polled the members of my Walking Group individually—there were 10 of us present—asking each to answer, consecutively, two questions. The first was: "What do you think **should** be the decision on the case?" And the second was, "What do you think **will** be the decision on the case?" My purpose was obvious—I wanted to find out whether there was a difference between their decision and the Sandiganbayan's decision. And, of course, I wanted to find out why.

On the first question, the house was divided 6 to 4—six saying that Erap should be convicted, and the rest saying he should be acquitted. On the second question, the house was evenly divided. What was interesting, however, was that three out of the four who thought that Erap should be acquitted, also thought that he would be convicted by the Sandiganbayan, while four out of the six who thought that Erap should be convicted also thought that the Sandiganbayan would acquit him.

In other words, seven out of 10 did not think that the decision of the court would agree with their individual decisions. And if one assumes that the opinions of my group were "conscience" opinions on Erap's guilt or innocence, rather than based on political affiliations, then the results of my informal and unrepresentative poll could be interpreted to mean that, although not unanimous, the majority were of the belief that the Sandiganbayan's decision would be politically based.

But as it turns out, the assumption of "conscience" opinions was not quite borne out: two of the four who thought Erap should be acquitted did not necessarily think that he was not guilty—one said that he should be acquitted because other politicians had committed greater offenses, and were scot-free; while the other said that he should be acquitted because "*kawawa naman*" (he is to be pitied).

My group broke up to go home and watch the proceedings, and I must tell the reader that I was prepared for the long haul—I expected to be listening to the reading of that decision for at least four hours; so I had all kinds of snacks and papers in front of me for note-taking and such. So the motion of the defense attorneys that only the "dispositive portion" of the decision be read stunned me. The very reason the Supreme Court allowed courtroom coverage was, for heaven's sake, so the people could listen to the decision and learn how it was arrived at! And of course, the acquiescence of the Sandiganbayan to the request stunned me even more. It was over in 20 minutes, and I didn't even know why he was found guilty or not guilty.

The reaction of the partisans was to be expected: the defense thought it was a hometown decision; the prosecution thought it was a great decision. Unfortunately, not having been able as yet to finish wading through the 250 or so pages of defense and prosecution evidence and arguments, I cannot join the debate.

But I can certainly say the following: We have finally caught a big fish in our fight against corruption, and although this may be temporary, nevertheless it is reassuring—obviously not only to us, but to the international and business community as well, that we can do it. It also is a shot in the arm for our determined efforts to catch other possible big fish, whether it be ZTE, LT, or GMA. Whatever the final decision will be, the Filipino people have already won a great victory.

In the meantime, my vote for the most disgusting performance in reaction to the decision does not go to those directly affected (one has to give them leeway), but to Senate President Manuel Villar. It is the last time my vote goes to him.

Polls about Erap

SOCIAL CLIMATE

Mahar Mangahas

OVER THE PAST SIX YEARS, FORMER PRESIDENT Joseph "Erap" Estrada has remained a very significant political figure, and has thus been in the agenda of the regular quarterly Social Weather Surveys many times.

Following the trial. The public kept a strong interest in the plunder trial. Through the years, the trial was followed closely by nearly 50 percent of Filipinos, ranking it very high in a constantly-refreshed list of about 10 major news events of the previous quarter. Usually, the most salient event is followed closely by up to 60 percent, and the least salient one, by 30 percent or even less.

Erap's Net Trust Rating (trust percentage minus distrust percentage) was a very strong +58 in July 1998, the start of his term. It was much lower during the impeachment trial, but still positive: +10 in Dec. 8-11, 2000 and +11 in Jan. 6-9, 2001. But with Edsa II it collapsed to its all-time low of -21 in Jan. 27-29, 2001.

Trust in Erap stayed negative (net -10 to -12) during the February to April 2001 senatorial campaign. But it recovered to a neutral +1 in May 4-7, and +3 on May 14, election day itself.

The sympathy vote. In SWS' May 4-7, 2001 final pre-election survey, Loi Estrada reached the magic circle for the first time and eventually won.

For the rest of 2001, throughout 2002, and part of 2003, most people distrusted Erap (-15 at worst). But ever since the third quarter of 2003, most people have trusted him. His trust rating in 2006 ranged from +22 to +30. In February 2007 it was +25.

The strength of the Estrada sympathy vote continued not only into 2004, when Erap's son Jinggoy was an easy winner, but also into 2007, when SWS pre-election surveys found both Loi Estrada and Jinggoy's brother JV Ejercito in the winning 12, showing the electorate's willingness to put three Estradas in the Senate at the same time.

The September survey. Last Wednesday the 12th, in the afternoon, SWS released the finding of its new Sept. 2-5 survey showing that a minority of Filipinos believed he had enriched himself by millions of pesos through corrupt practices, and, consequently, that a majority expected the Sandiganbayan to acquit him. (The survey data processing was completed only on Sept. 11.)

As shown in the release, this result was practically identical with that of the previous regular SWS survey in June 2007; so it was no surprise. It was also similar to findings in the August 2007 survey in Metro Manila and four nearby provinces, which was commissioned by former Sen. Sergio Osmeña III.

Won't the verdict matter? Now that Erap has been convicted by the Sandiganbayan, won't disbelievers change their minds, and accept that he is guilty after all? Perhaps, to some extent. Perhaps, as Erap files a motion for reconsideration and/or appeals his case to the Supreme Court, some would stay loyal to him.

How many people have the means to access and the time to read the 200+ page decision? I think that the decision just to broadcast the verdict, minus the Sandiganbayan's non-partisan reasoning behind it, tended to prolong the pre-verdict biases of the people.

The class factor. Social class and education, rather than geographical area, are familiar factors in sentiments about Erap.

In the September 2007 SWS survey, most of class ABCs (58 percent) and college graduates (54 percent) believed that Erap committed plunder. Forty-four percent of ABCs and 56 percent of college graduates expected him to be convicted.

The idea of pardon. The survey showed much public compassion for Erap the prisoner, however luxurious his current prison might be. Almost half wanted him pardoned by President Macapagal-Arroyo immediately, in case of conviction by the Sandiganbayan. Another one-third wanted him pardoned eventually.

Those favoring immediate pardon were 55 percent among Es versus 37 percent among ABCs, and 56 percent among elementary dropouts versus 32 percent among college graduates.

Only 14 percent said he should never be pardoned—reaching 17 percent among class ABCs compared to 11 percent among class Es, and reaching 24 percent among college graduates compared to 9 percent among elementary dropouts.

Length of imprisonment. Public opinion as to the proper prison sentence for Erap, in case of conviction, is remarkably gentle, considering that plunder is an extremely serious crime.

Twelve percent say he has already been confined enough, and should be released. Among those who feel otherwise, the average suggested length of extra confinement is only 5 years.

On average, ABCs say he deserves 6 years, Ds say 5 years, and Es say 4.7 years, of added confinement. On average, college graduates say he deserves 7.5 years, whereas elementary dropouts say 4.1 years, or a difference of only 3.4 years between the extremes.

To me, these differences in sentiments about if, and when, to pardon Erap, and about the proper prison term for him are relatively small. They show sizable compassion among even the middle-to-upper classes and those with higher education.

Now that Filipinos see how long **reclusion perpetua** means, according to law, will many lengthen their ideas of how much longer Erap deserves to be confined? Now that Filipinos see Erap rejecting the idea of pardon, will many change their minds about proposing it for him?

The next quarterly Social Weather Survey will answer such questions.

* * *

Contact SWS: www.sws.org.ph or mahar.mangahas@sws.org.ph.

How to build a Library Hub

COMMENTARY

Neni Sta. Romana Cruz

BY WAY OF EXPLAINING THIS OBVIOUS OBSESSION of mine with the Library Hub projects of the Department of Education, let me say that the one thing that makes me feel truly deprived as a Filipino when I visit other countries is seeing their public libraries.

The very existence of a public library system is impressive in itself. The fact that it works with a regular clientele frequenting it to check out books and even non-print materials as freely and as frequently as they desire is beyond my wildest expectations. One summer in London, a neighborhood public library was running a summer "read-a-thon" for the children. It even gave me reading promotion buttons and bookmarks and medals. In the United States, a Filipino friend says she has been able to keep up with her reading, thanks to her library card. And expatriates newly settled in the Philippines cannot believe that we do not have anything close to such a public library.

Closer to home, the Singapore public library system is cause for much envy. During the recent National Children's Book Day, we discovered that Singapore had a campaign to get storytelling fathers visit schools—an idea about which we in the Philippine Board on Books for Young People are enthused—and it gathered 10,000 fathers.

Our fledgling group of four storytelling pioneers made up of Paolo Abrera, Vim Nadera, Anthony Pangilinan and Manolo Silayan thus deserve every acknowledgment.

How can the idea of such "wholesale" libraries in our midst to service public schools not merit this awe and attention? How can storybooks be considered luxuries and rare items especially in a school setting?

Go beyond the usual motherhood statements of making every Filipino child a reader and focus—and be impressed by—the DepEd's track record of 35 such Hubs to date (with 13,000 to 75,000 new storybooks in their collection), with 265 more to go by the 2010 deadline.

Quite a few readers have written to inquire about the criteria for embarking on a Library Hub project with the DepEd. Here's how it works:

- The division superintendent and/or the sponsor writes a letter of intent and submits a project proposal to the Office of Teodoro Sangil, undersecretary for finance and administration at the DepEd's central office in Pasig.
- The DepEd's Library Hub team then conducts a site inspection with the engineering team, holds meetings with the sponsors and recipients; and evaluates the submitted documents.
- The approval of the education undersecretary/secretary will set the actual process going—after those first requirements are met.

The additional specific requirements are:

- A site/location accessible to public schools
- A government building with a lot area of at least 250-300 square meters
- A sponsor to fund the building renovation and/or construction as well as the provision of furniture and equipment (e.g. bookshelves, trolleys, plastic bins, aluminum ladder, computers, etc.)

Every Library Hub is a joint investment of the DepEd and the sponsor. The DepEd provides the storybooks from the general operations fund and a generous World Bank grant. An architectural design of the Library Hub (by Leandro V. Locsin & Associates), teacher-training, evaluation and monitoring round out the DepEd's participation in the project.

The first Library Hubs were set up in Naga City and Davao and the most recent in Masbate. Consider that this project was just launched in the last quarter of 2003 by former Undersecretary Juan Miguel Luz at the Educators' Congress.

Beverly Gonda, Library Hub Project Officer says in her latest update that a teacher training for the 35 Hubs has been completed and work has begun on the next set of Hubs. They are now preparing for the training of the librarians who will actually manage the daily operations of the Hubs all over the country. Either the local government unit or a private company or an NGO—or all of them together—can sponsor a Library Hub project. Apart from the building construction or renovation and the equipment listed above usually in the range of P1.5 million to P3 million, they must also hire and maintain the Hub personnel.

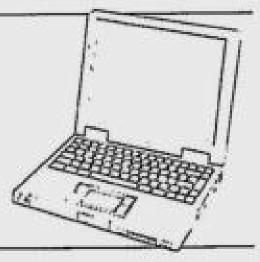
There are sponsorship schemes to simplify participation. You can be a "Pal of the Hub" for a modest donation of P50,000 or progress to being a "Patron" or a "Partner." You can even have the enviable title of being "Lord of the Hub" for a million pesos. (Yes, the next best thing to being Lord of the Rings!) For P5 million, you earn the right to name the Hub.

This may sound like a circuitous process, but rest assured that the project is worth all the effort and endless meetings. And do banish any thoughts of my being on the DepEd payroll. Not necessary, as I would sell my soul for books and literacy.

Neni Sta. Romana Cruz is a writer and editor, a member of the Philippine Board on Books for Young People and a trustee of the Sa Aklat Sisikat Foundation. Email comments to nenisrc@gmail.com. For more information on the Library Hub, you can call Beverly Gonda at 633-9342 or 632-1361 - 71 loc. 2221.

'Resigned' Teves learns his lesson

BETWEEN DEADLINES



EYEBROW-RAISING. WHEN HE ARRIVED IN Sydney for the Apec meetings, Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes almost went unrecognized by his colleagues. A Cabinet secretary recounted how someone he didn't know asked him to sit beside him in one meeting. When he looked closer, he couldn't believe it was Reyes. Reyes' eyes were different and so was his hair, the Cabinet official swore. Even President Macapagal-Arroyo was said to have been surprised.

Reason? Reyes now sports a brand-new set of thick eyebrows. But a Cabinet official suggested the eyebrow lift could be for medical reasons.

J. Javellana

* * *

GARY'S VACATION. Finance Secretary Margarito Teves tried to humor his audience on Wednesday, but nobody laughed. His joke even unsettled his boss, President Macapagal-Arroyo.

While speaking at the mid-year economic briefing, Teves suddenly confessed to a half-awake crowd that he wanted to go on an "overdue long vacation."

That woke them up. Businessmen started circulating text messages in no time.

At least one text message reached Malacañang. A frantic President then called up her chief economic official.

"I explained to her that that was really done in jest," a somber-looking Teves later told reporters. "My intention really [was] to make our people laugh. [If] I will go on leave, the first person I will ask permission from will be the President. When she called me up, I explained to her that 'my intention, Mrs. President, was to put humor in my speech.'"

Teves explained to the President that he was usually the last person to speak in such conferences, at a time when audiences were already listless. Besides, he said, "some perceive me as too serious." So he cracked a joke.

Teves said he thought the joke served its purpose, "but some people also gave another meaning to it."

But he has certainly learned his lesson. "Maybe because of that incident, I'll have to make sure that this time, it's really clear—the intended and unintended effect should have been considered."

M. Ubac

* * *

KOBE RULES. Heads of state, top diplomats, even a Saudi prince allowed full media coverage when they jetted into Manila. But for basketball superstar Kobe Bryant, exclusivity was the name of the game.

When Bryant arrived in a Gulf Stream jet on Sept. 4, media regulations were stricter than protocol enforced for foreign dignitaries: Philippine organizers allowed only a handpicked pool of lensmen and a crew from a television network to cover the early evening arrival.

Reporters, even those already accredited by airport authorities, were not allowed in. Security concerns? Not exactly. Bryant's Philippine media handlers said their instruction was to allow only photographers from major broadsheets in. No reporters' interviews please.

T. Quismundo

* * *

VILLAR'S BAD MOOD. Ex-president Joseph Estrada's guilty verdict obviously put Senate President Manuel Villar in a foul mood last Wednesday. Though he was instrumental in Estrada's impeachment, Villar reconciled with the deposed leader sometime before seeking reelection last May.

Villar quickly adjourned the Senate session Wednesday afternoon and afterwards refused to tell reporters why, except to say that "*maraming senador na gustong mag-isip ng bagay-bagay ngayon.*"

When pressed by a reporter, he blurted out: "*Buhay pa kasi sila. Alam mo, pag buhay ka kailangan mag-isip ka ng mga bagay-bagay.*" He did not stop there: "*Pag di ka na nag-iisip patay ka na.*"

Afterwards, he told the reporter that he was only "joking." He called up the same reporter several minutes later to apologize. He was just taking a crack at humor, he said.

D. Pazzibugan

* * *

ALL LIP SERVICE. The government has been harping on the use of biofuels, even becoming the first country in Asia to pass a law mandating their use. So why is the law's author, neophyte Sen. Juan Miguel "Migz" Zubiri, all worked up?

Mainly because of the Department of Energy and Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes. In an informal lunch last Thursday, Migz was indignant, complaining about the DOE's seeming lack of action in pushing the use of alternative fuels.

They're all lip service, he said of Reyes and his numerous claims about making biofuels use a priority. President Macapagal-Arroyo was the "No. 1 seller" of biofuels to investors and to the public, but the DOE—the agency that should be at the forefront of developing the sector—"is not delivering."

This prompted him to suggest the appointment of a "Renewable Energy Czar" who will spearhead all of the government's efforts to promote the use of renewable and alternative energy forms. The best person for the job, in Migz's book: former Energy Secretary Vincent Perez.

A. Ho

* * *

BLAST FROM THE PAST. From the Sept. 18, 1990 issue of the Philippine Daily Inquirer:

Former Tanodbayan Raul Gonzalez is in a jolly mood these days. Reason: the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, as well as other lawyers' groups, have asked the Supreme Court to lift his two-year suspension from law practice due to a ruckus he raised against the magistrates.

But Gonzalez says if ever he is allowed to resume his law practice, he has no dreams of reassuming his post as the special prosecutor of the former anti-graft body, which is now known as the Office of the Ombudsman. "I feel Cory has completely abandoned me," he says.

Raul wants to defend indigents of Iloilo and Olongapo cities, his and his wife's hometowns, en route to a 1992 bid for a Senate seat.

"That will vindicate me," he claims.

Bouncing back

YOUNG BLOOD

Essie Francia G. Oliver

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

MY JOURNEY TOWARD RESILIENCY HAS BEEN THE true awakening in my youthful life. I always thought of myself as tough enough to face life and to deal with problems as adventures rather than struggles. I never thought I would be spared from walking on thorns. But still I felt the world hit me too hard from three directions: The Guy, My Academics and The Disease.

I had just turned 20 and was enjoying the freedom of a young adult eager to discover the world out there. On a night-out during the Christmas break, I was introduced to this guy by a school mate. He looked nice and tall, close to my ideal guy—or at least that was my first impression of him. He was my first brave venture into relationships, and I thought he would not prove too hot to handle. I told myself that everything would be just fine, that this would be an opportunity for me to grow and mature.

He was the type who gave me dozens of roses to put a smile on my lips, even though a little red rose from the front yard of his neighbor would have been enough for me. He was a member of the basketball varsity team of their school, but a little bit shy and quiet most of the time, a complement to my friendly and outgoing nature. What made me really like him was that he wasn't your typical, egoistic guy who happens to know how to play basketball. He took care of me and was always happy to do small favors I asked of him. It felt like I was on top of his priority list, even higher. I admired how he loved his family, how he wanted to protect me and how he imagined life with me. Our relationship deepened and one day we were promising each other that we would be bound together in marriage someday.

Even today, I still can't believe that all good things must end. But one day, he just gave up for reasons I don't know if valid or not. The guy I had wanted to spend the rest of my life with turned out to be unsure of himself, afraid of the future and fearful of being shown up as a failure in front of me.

The problem was that he was trying to use my own situation to measure himself. I study at the State University, I have a good family background, and I speak well and stand a good chance of reaching the stars someday. Whatever he felt about all that was totally out of my control. I couldn't imagine how being me could make another person look down on himself. But that was how he felt.

When he told me his decision, I felt betrayed and outraged. Your enemies cannot hurt you as much as the people you love.

The fact was that at about the same time, I was experiencing my share of fear. I was supposed to graduate that year, but I was still having a long engagement with some math subjects. For the first time in my studies, I felt helpless and very depressed. Academics is my life, my passion. The fulfillment I get from my studies fuels my happiness and my drive to excellence. And there I was, almost getting kicked out of my college.

I cannot accept failure because I know I'm better than that. I have so much faith in myself, but why did I feel as if something was dragging me down? It was as if I had suddenly become an endangered species. This struggle, or rather this adventure, almost drained my optimism and my resolve to maximize my potential. I needed to be unleashed. I needed to save myself not just from failing the subject but from not believing in myself anymore. I told myself this had to stop. But how?

I realized the answer lay somewhere inside of me. I had to conquer my fear before it conquered me.

Apart from my broken relationship and my struggle with fear, I was also recovering from a thyroidectomy. I had been diagnosed with hyperthyroidism in my freshman year and took medication. But after three years, I stopped taking medicine because my palpitations had subsided. Soon I began experiencing symptoms of goiter. I always felt tired and sleepy and I became sensitive and emotional. I couldn't control my temper and my irritability increased. It came to a point when I thought I wasn't me anymore.

My disease required much patience and understanding from the people around me. And of course, a lot was taken from me because of my illness. I had to stay at home and rest. I couldn't take part in things I enjoyed doing. I couldn't go on out-of-town camping trips, have night-outs with my friends or even just stroll around the campus. I missed being me. It was prolonged agony. It felt like death.

But I kept my spirit burning. Prayers helped me overcome my fears and anxieties and face everything with courage. Just when I thought I was losing myself, I found myself again—only better and wiser. I learned that there are no mistakes, only lessons to be learned. I learned to feed my passion constantly and never set limits on how high I can soar. I lost nothing but actually gained much from my experience. I cannot be thankful enough for the undeserved grace I received from above.

I am doing well right now. My studies are going great, I am the head of our student organization and I'm graduating after the next semester. I am getting healthier every day and getting ready for a relationship that will happen at the right time with a fine man of God. I dug deeper into my faith and learned not just to be tough but, above all, to understand, to be patient, to love some more. That was how I was able to bounce back.

Essie Francia G. Oliver, 23, is a BS Geography major at the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

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THEY SAID

Kapampangan Revolt

"There'd be a revolution in Pampanga. It's like unseating Cory Aquino."

—George Garcia, election lawyer of defeated Pampanga gubernatorial candidate Lilia Pineda, expressing his concern about the likely consequences if Gov. Ed Panlilio loses the electoral fraud case against him

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Abalos' other role as broker

LIGHTNING STRIKES TWICE IN THE Philippines.

Even as the culprits behind the unresolved Mega-Pacific scam have yet to be held accountable, now comes another irregularity that will again defraud the people of precious public funds.

The highly questionable deal signed by ZTE Corp. of China and the Arroyo administration stinks so much that attempts by Transportation and Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza and Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos to clear their names won't succeed.

Abalos acting as a broker for the Arroyo administration? It would seem that aside from being an election operator for Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Abalos plays a more important role for this government—as a broker of highly irregular deals.

We cannot forget the election computerization contract which Abalos entered into and which defrauded the Filipino people of around P2 billion. He has not been made to account for that.

It's about time that Abalos and Mendoza and, ultimately, Ms Arroyo be made to pay for again hoodwinking the Filipino people.

Impeach and prosecute Comelec's Abalos. Sack and prosecute DOTC's Mendoza.

—ROEL GARCIA,
spokesperson, Maypagasa,
roelgarcia_772000@yahoo.com

De Quiros is wrong, GMA did right by appointing De Leon

THIS REFERS TO CONRADO DE QUIROS' column titled "A man named Muslim." (INQUIRER, 9/4/07)

The facts are not wrong; it's the gist of the whole matter that is. Ask every student, faculty member, alumnus or alumna who has known Gen. Ricardo de Leon, and you will be surprised at the support he has been getting and at the reforms that he has carried out in school.

Thousands of students rallied in front of the administration building to show support for the only man in a very long time who has managed to gain respect in a community to which he never belonged before his supposed turnover. Academic qualification isn't the only path to becoming a university system president; everything taken into account, the Mindanao State University badly needs an iron hand that only De Leon has delivered.

When everything is said and done, this is probably one of those rare moments when Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo got it right. Perhaps, the INQUIRER should start sending its columnists to ground zero before asking them to write. Truth, or at least a semblance of it, is always more valuable than the travel expense.

—SAM MANLOSA,
Blk 8, Lot 13, Tierra Grande Royale,
Manggahan, General Trias, Cavite 4107

Noli's empty boast about soaring economy

"OFWs ARE PROOF OF ECONOMIC boom—De Castro." (INQUIRER, 9/2/07) If indeed the Philippine economy is booming, why are more and more Filipinos leaving the country for work abroad? They're leaving the Philippines because there are no job opportunities here. How then can Vice President Noli de Castro claim an economic surge?

It is the overseas Filipino workers who are keeping the Philippine economy afloat, not the government. De Castro is part of the government but he does nothing to stop the exodus.

Thailand is in need of thousands of skilled workers which the Philippines can surely provide. What is De Castro doing? If he can do something about this, maybe he'd earn bragging rights in helping OFWs. We Filipinos are going to Thailand for different reasons, but only with one thing in mind—to find a decent job not available to us in the Philippines. Many of us entered as tourists, then became "TNTs." Most of us have been successful because there are lot of opportunities here, unlike in the Philippines.

Fortunately, we don't have domestic helpers here, mostly professionals. If De Castro wants to leave a legacy, he can do so by reducing the number of Filipino teachers who are on the verge of falling into the pit of mendicancy.

What is the significance of education to OFWs who are domestic helpers? Is it necessary to have a college diploma to become a DH? Most of the OFWs have no college diploma; they honed their skills through experience because they could not afford to continue their studies. Diploma is useless nowadays. Special skills cannot be obtained from the universities; they are acquired in the low-salaried jobs.

The Vice President should not brag about a soaring economy while college graduates are making do with menial jobs to survive.

—LEAN ALBERTO,
lean_al@yahoo.com

Dishonorable suggestion

THIS REFERS TO THE LETTER TITLED "COMprehensive audit of Philippine debts urged." (INQUIRER, 8/22/07) Being an Austrian by birth, and with a Filipino family, I would rather urge that the matter be given serious thought. I don't mean the auditing; I mean the populist suggestion that the loans be not paid or that the lenders just forget them.

It is not the duty of a foreign creditor to investigate if a government loan conforms with all the laws of the country. For example, Austria cannot be made liable if the Philippine government later changes its laws in a way that makes the goods acquired with the loan useless or inoperable. Why should the Austrian taxpayer pay for the loan?

I am very sure that the same groups urging foreign lenders to give up their rights on loan repayments would cry foul if the Philippine government does the same thing with money it has lent to a foreign borrower.

If there is a need to scrutinize loans, then it should be done with the new loans and not with existing loans. The Philippines, which is extremely dependent on the remittances of overseas Filipino workers and on foreign credits, should not scare away lenders by frequently threatening that it will not repay its loans. Just look at the German investments and loans to the government after the Naia 3 controversy.

Nonpayment of loans is always a bad thing, whether it involves private or government loans. If the project that a loan funded did not turn out right, that is a matter for local investigation which should have nothing to do with the foreign creditor.

It is not an honorable thing to let the taxpayers of the lending countries pay the debts of the Philippine government, just because the Philippine negotiators did not do their homework well before asking for the loans.

—KURT SETSCHEN,
sirius.3000@gmx.net

Teachers censure GSIS for inefficiency

IN BEHALF OF THE MANILA PUBLIC SCHOOL teachers, I commend INQUIRER columnists Ramon Farolan and Solita Monsod for drawing public attention to the grievances of members of the Government Service Insurance System. Their columns have become a vent for the teachers' disappointments with this State-run insurance system. We salute the two of them.

The restiveness among teachers is now escalating; they want prompt solutions to the various GSIS-related problems besetting their sector. It is intolerable that the inefficiency of the GSIS has gone from bad to worse under GSIS president and general manager Winston Garcia. Outright irregularities and one-sided policies—which violate Republic Act 8291 (the GSIS Act)—have become the order of the day.

The teachers denounce the GSIS programs, like the eCard Plus, and policies that are being imposed by virtue of board resolutions that contravene RA 8291. These are bitter pills that the GSIS forces the teachers to swallow.

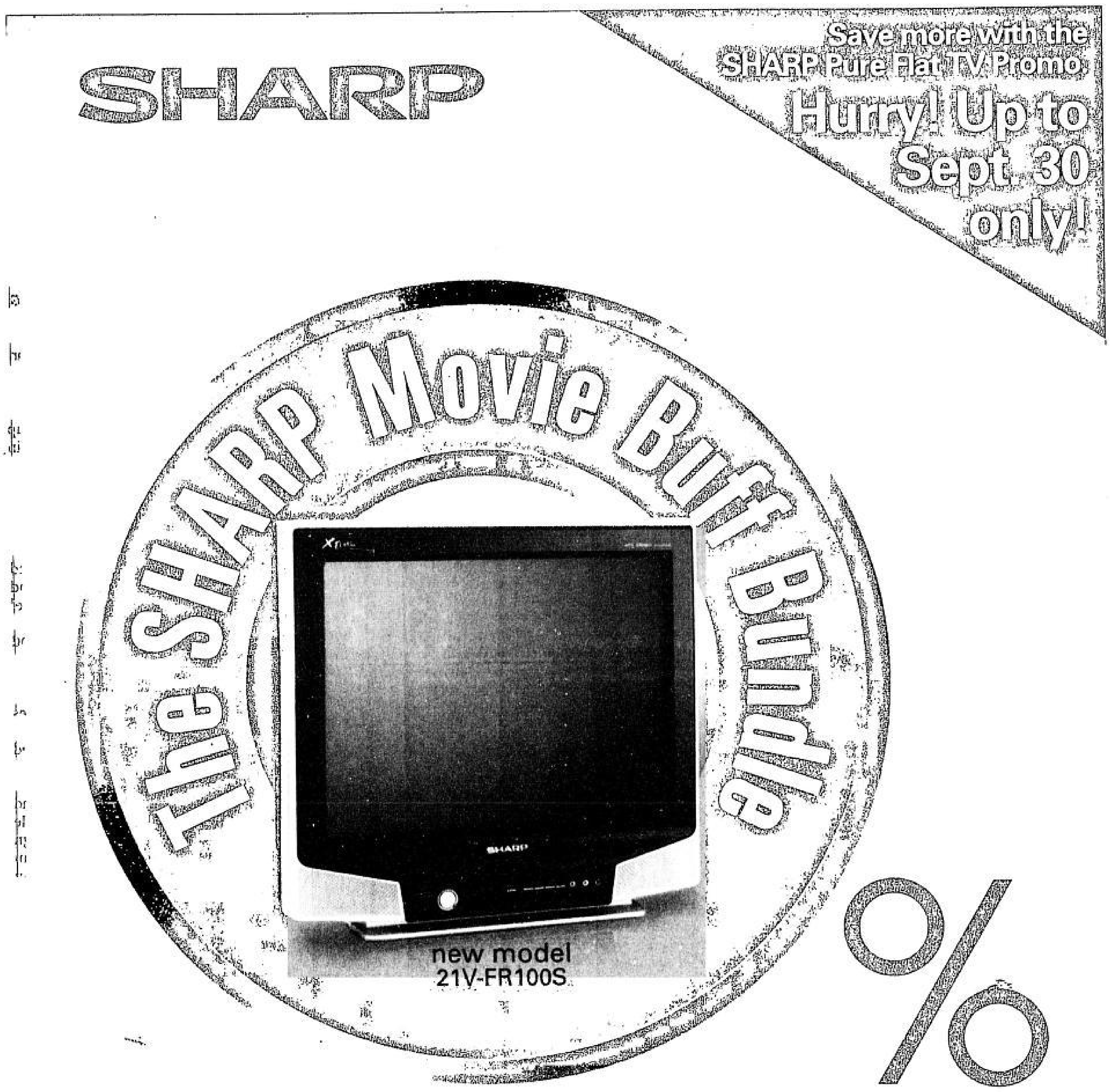
Furthermore, teachers are disgruntled and suffer so much because of the inefficiency of the system in posting their contributions and loan payments as well as in updating their membership records (teachers compose 40 percent of GSIS membership). Even worse, some of the teachers' privileges have been taken away from them because, per GSIS records, teachers are delinquent members when, in fact, payments for their loan accounts and contributions for their GSIS premiums are religiously deducted every month from their salaries and these deductions are reflected on their monthly payrolls.

Despite several dialogues and mass actions initiated by the Manila Public School Teachers Association, the GSIS remains complacent to and unaffected by their complaints and demands. Because of this, they are now planning for a bigger mass action. The teachers plead with the GSIS officials, please don't let them push through with this.

The teachers also appeal to the government, particularly Congress, to ease their plight in the hands of incompetent officials of the GSIS. Please investigate these people who run the GSIS.

Finally, we, the teachers, urge the Arroyo administration to remove Garcia from the GSIS.

—MEDARDO T. MERCADO,
president, Manila Public School
Teachers Association,
933 Tolentino St., Sampaloc, Manila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Bureau Chief Edralyn L. Benedicto

Slain marine honored in Tacloban

By Vicente S. Labro
Tacloban City

IT WAS VERY HARD FOR 54-year-old Tereso Semeniano Jr. to accept that he would never see his first-born again. But the thought that his son had died while in the service of his country has somehow eased the pain in his heart.

"It is very hard for a parent to lose a child but what can we do? He died on duty. So, what is best now is for the family to move on," said Tereso at the sideline of the culminating program of the crime prevention week celebration recently held at the Tacloban City Hall.

Tereso, a native of Tacloban, was to receive that day a certificate of recognition awarded posthumously to his son, Private First Class Elizar Semeniano, a Marine who died last July in Basilan.

The award, given by the Department of the Interior and Local Government, was in recognition of Elizar's "selfless commitment to his duty and love of his country."

Elizar was one of the Marines belonging to the 1st Recon Company, 1st Marine Brigade of the Philippine Marine Corps, who were on their way back to their base after a fruitless search for abducted Italian priest Giancarlo Bossi when fired upon by alleged Muslim rebels.

After more than seven hours of firefight, 14 Marines were killed with 10 of them beheaded and mutilated, among them, Elizar.

Tereso said he learned from some of the survivors that his son's right arm and a finger were cut off by their enemies.

Elizar was about 23 years old when he was recruited into the Marine Corps. He had been in the service for about four years when he was felled in battle.

His remains was brought to their residence in Barangay Taguictic, Tacloban City. These were accompanied by Elizar's girlfriend Luchie Rose Salvador of Zamboanga City and her mother and grandmother. Luchie and Elizar were supposed to get married this month.

Also a marine

Tereso knew how it was to be a marine, having joined the military service in 1975 at the age of 23. He was among the Marine recruits from Tacloban who trained in Ternate, Cavite. After six months of rigid training he reported to his unit, the Armored Battalion where he had been assigned until he retired in 1998.

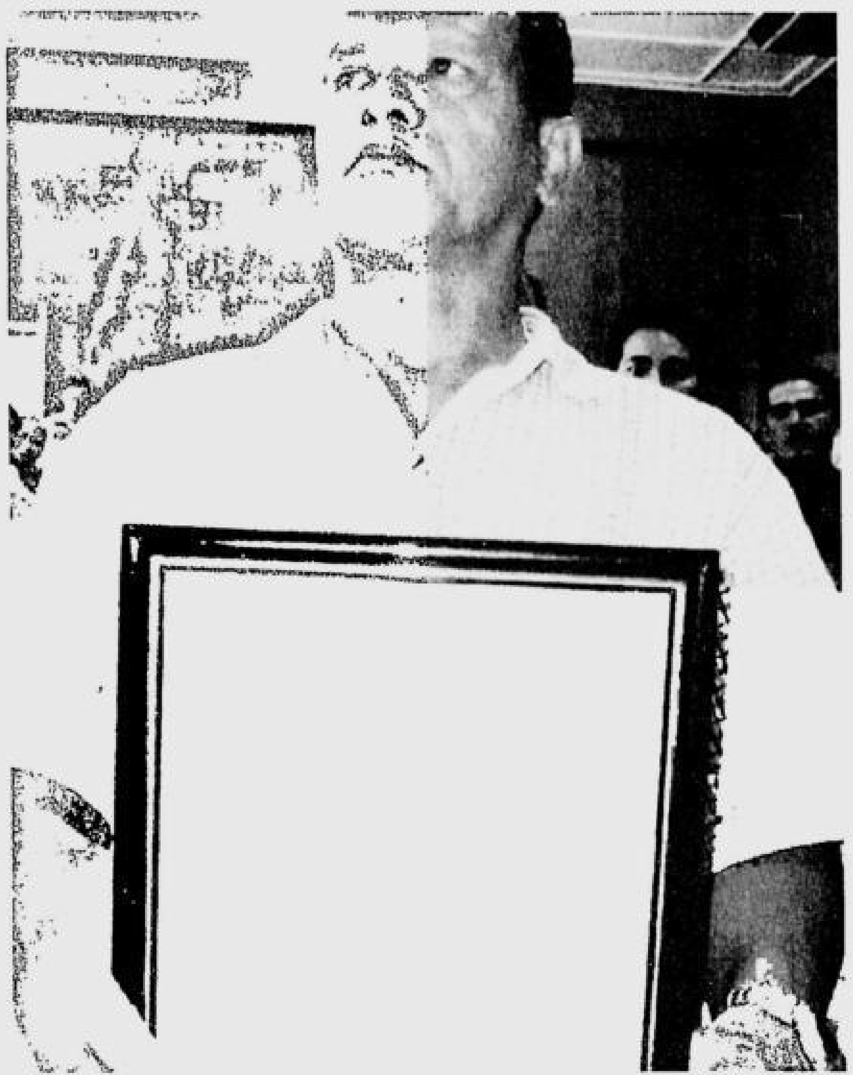
He survived 25 years not only of rigid training but also the fierce battles.

He had been assigned to different places in Mindanao, among them Basilan and Jolo. In most of those years, his wife Ederlinda, 54, and their three sons were with him wherever he was assigned.

"My children grew up in military camps. When I was assigned in Zamboanga they were there and they saw the situation of the Marines ... they saw the work of a Marine," Tereso said.

No wonder Tereso's second son, Allan, also chose to become a Marine.

Allan was assigned in Jolo with the 3rd Marine Battalion, but was recently transferred to Fort Bonifacio.



TERESO Semeniano Jr. holds the certificate of recognition given by DILG to his son Elizar who died in Basilan last July 10. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Asked if his third son would also become a Marine, Tereso said his youngest son is also inclined to becoming a Marine. "But I wish he'd finish his studies first," Tereso said.

The youngest son, he said, is taking up mechanical engineering in a university in Tacloban.

Bringing flavors to a soundless world

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
Iloilo City

ANGEL Layagan with his cooking teacher, Herminilda Tupas MA. DIOSA LABISTE

IF HE CANNOT FULLY COMMUNICATE with signs, gestures and smiles, he might as well convey the words and meanings through flavors and aromas.

With that, Angel Layagan, 26 and deaf, decided to learn how to cook by enrolling at the West Visayas State University (WVSU) nonformal education class with 30 other students.

While he shares some plans of his classmates who enrolled because they want to work abroad and open a catering or restaurant business, Angel's goal, first and foremost, is to break the barrier in the soundless world.

"I wish to open a business, a restaurant for deaf in two years," he wrote in a piece of paper during the interview.

Angel said some of his deaf friends would want to join him run a restaurant or a café, probably the first to be put up by the deaf who want to go mainstream, beyond the reassuring care of local handicap associations.

A high school graduate of the Special Education Integrated School for Exceptional Children (Sped-Isec), Angel would have wanted to go to college and become a licensed teacher. He applied, but the local universities were not ready to take him in because they lack teachers adept in sign language.

Neither could he afford to hire an interpreter to bring to class, Angel said. He was asked to enroll instead in the nonformal education class.

Angel said he was happy in the cooking class run by Herminilda Tupas. Students are taught the basics of home cooking and cooking for business. The recipes have ingredients one can add or leave out, depending on the purpose. Among the dishes are "*rellenong bangus*" (stuffed milkfish), "*chorizo*" (sausage) and other cured meat products, beef steak, "*embutido*" (meat loaf) and desserts.

"The recipes are easy," said Angel when asked if he learned quickly. "I can cook them when I have my restaurant someday."

His favorite is beef steak served with caramelized onion rings. But during the interview, he was cooking *embutido*, and he learned how to mix ground lean pork with extenders, roll them into mini-logs and steam them for an hour.

He thinks the best menus are vegetables, hearty soups and stir-fry, because they are easy to cook.

Angel said he wanted to learn more international cookery, food with flavors from lands unknown to him. But he has no intention of working abroad, even if his two sisters are in The Netherlands. "I love the Philippines," he wrote.

Improvised sign language

In his cooking class, Angel gets along well with others even if they do not know sign language. But he can easily communicate with them by using his hands, face and body. For example, his classmate motioned by holding a colander, making circles and pointing to meat slices. That means Angel will wash the meat.

According to Tupas, Angel is cheerful and friendly. He makes effort to communicate with hearing persons and does not feel inferior to them. He also makes full use of his mobile phone by sending text messages when hand signals are lost in translation.

Angel's parents died when he was 15 and he was left to the care of his older siblings. Today, he earns his keep by working in a canteen at the WVSU, washing plates and making sandwiches and hamburgers. He also earns P100 every time he teaches sign language to the deaf and nondeaf for an hour or two. He also speaks in seminars on deaf culture.

He plans to master the sign language, its many variants and inflections, because he wants to be an interpreter for the deaf who are victims of crimes and sexual abuse, like rape.

Analyn Porras of the Association of Disabled Persons in Iloilo said more and more deaf in Iloilo had become confident in facing the hurdles in the hearing world.

Some were able to acquire technical skills; others were trained in computer programming. Some worked as servers, gas attendants, grocery clerks and teachers.

The discrimination remains, according to Porras, but there is more openness these days, thanks to the deaf and volunteers who advocate for deaf rights. "We have started to listen to them," she said.

'Body and Sole' for Cebu's weary wage earners

By Irene R. Sino Cruz
Cebu City

WHEN HE FIRST WENT INTO BUSINESS, Johnie Lim was not successful. He returned to being an employee but he dreamed of owning a successful firm one day. So, when he started his day spa business, little did he imagine it would become as successful as it is now.

After he finished his accountancy degree from the Siliman University, Johnie worked in various local and multinational companies engaged in shipping, manufacture of furniture and toys, and pharmaceuticals.

He ventured briefly into the restaurant business after retirement, using his separation pay as capital. When it failed, he went back to work but the failure in his first venture did not deter him from going into another business. So when he saw that the health and wellness industry is an emerging sector, he decided to go into the business himself, but not without preparing for it.

"There was no preparation whatsoever when I opened the restaurant. I just thought that putting up a restaurant would make a good business, so I went into it. But this time, I have taken time to come up with a business plan to ensure its success," Lim said.

He was working then as the general manager of a Korean-owned company, manufacturing stuffed toys. When the company had to face competition from China, Lim decided to look for an alternative source of livelihood.

Inspiration

In 2003, he picked up a back issue of the US magazine Entrepreneur, which contained an article on the potential of the health and wellness industry. Since he has been making use of massage and wellness services, he believed that the degree of success is high if he goes into this type of business.

However, he wanted something different from what was available in Cebu.

Drawing from his experiences of day spas in Manila and a similar type of business abroad, he came up with a menu of services that include body massage, foot spa and facial treatment using a combination of different procedures.

"With little cash and big determination plus the varied experiences I gained from my 22 years of employment, I put up this business with a clear mission and vision: to provide health and wellness services to the most number of people at prices within everybody's reach, and to become the number one massage spa in the country," Lim said.

Thus, Body and Sole Body Massage and Foot Spa opened its doors on May 15, 2003. To differentiate it from the massage clinics existing here at the time, Johnie introduced music, lights, aroma and better amenities as well as friendly customer service.

Before he knew it, Lim had to expand his first outlet from 50 square meters (sqm) to 150 sqm since people were lining up for Body and Sole's services.

When his friends expressed interest to buy a Body and Sole franchise from him, Lim decided to offer franchises to enable people like him to go into business with a higher success rate.

"From 12 employees, we are now more than 500 therapists scattered nationwide. The total capital investments of all Body and Sole outlets have reached P50 million and the combined annual gross sales are in the vicinity of P60 million to P70 million, with the combined annual income of about P25 million," he pointed out.

Growth

Body and Sole has grown to 30 branches and affiliates—25 are franchises and five are company owned.

BODY and Sole founder and chief executive officer Johnie C. Lim and wife Flor pose with Cebuana singer Raki Vega. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

He noted that affordability has played a major role in the success of the business. According to Lim, Body and Sole charges only P180 for a facial that costs P500 in saloons. He also attributes Body and Sole's success to his passion for the business and targeting the niche market, timing and lot of luck.

While Body and Sole has become a successful endeavor for him, Lim set his sights on a broader goal. He has become an advocate of the local spa industry development. As he saw the need to address the issues of professionalism and competence, which hound the industry, he and the other day spa owners formed an association—the Spa and Wellness Association of Cebu (SWAC).

The association's goal is to help in the development of the local spa industry through the licensing of therapists by the Department of Health and the accreditation of the spas by the Department of Tourism.

Lim's personal goal, however, is to position Body and Sole as the Jollibee of the spa industry, providing quality spa services at affordable prices. "I would like to see every city in the country has a Body and Sole. Now that I've made my mark on the industry, I would like to cater to people coming from all walks of life so that they also become part of the health and wellness revolution," he added.

Across the NATION

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Pols interfere with design of SCTEx

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—A BATTLE FOR INTERchanges has erupted at the national flagship project Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway, with Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid, Subic-Clark Secretary Edgardo Pamintuan and Pampanga Rep. Carmelo Lazatin pushing for their respective sites to change the one already approved by President Macapagal-Arroyo at the Porac-Angeles City boundary in August.

But Narciso Abaya, president and chief executive officer of the Bases Conversion Development Authority, the proponent of the SCTEx, is "sticking by the President's directive."

"This is probably the best compromise among competing locations. My stand is personal. The most compelling reason for me is that this was the directive of the President to me," Abaya told San Fernando Mayor Oscar Rodriguez and businessmen on Friday.

Abaya was referring to the planned interchange in Barangay Manuali in Porac town that the Advocacy for the Development of Central Luzon had proposed.

Legislative councils in Pampanga, San Fernando and Angeles cities have endorsed the location in respective resolutions.

That site will be linked to a planned 6.4-km road leading either to a road on the eastern FVR Megadike toward the Pampanga capital city of San Fernando, and toward Angeles via the existing Cauayan Road. The SCTEx side heads to Porac and Angeles City as well.

Abaya said Secretary Cerge Remonde, director-general of the Presidential Management Staff, had directed him, through an Aug. 23 memorandum, to submit an implementation plan for that interchange.

Rodriguez and Gov. Eddie Panlilio have pushed for the interchange in Manuali to connect San Fernando and southern and eastern Pampanga towns to the SCTEx.

"San Fernando is the regional government center, the banking center, the gateway to many provinces in Central Luzon. It shouldn't be isolated from the SCTEx and the opportunities these will give to the people, especially the business sector. The national government saved San Fernando in 1995 from lahar. It shouldn't be left out now," Rodriguez said.

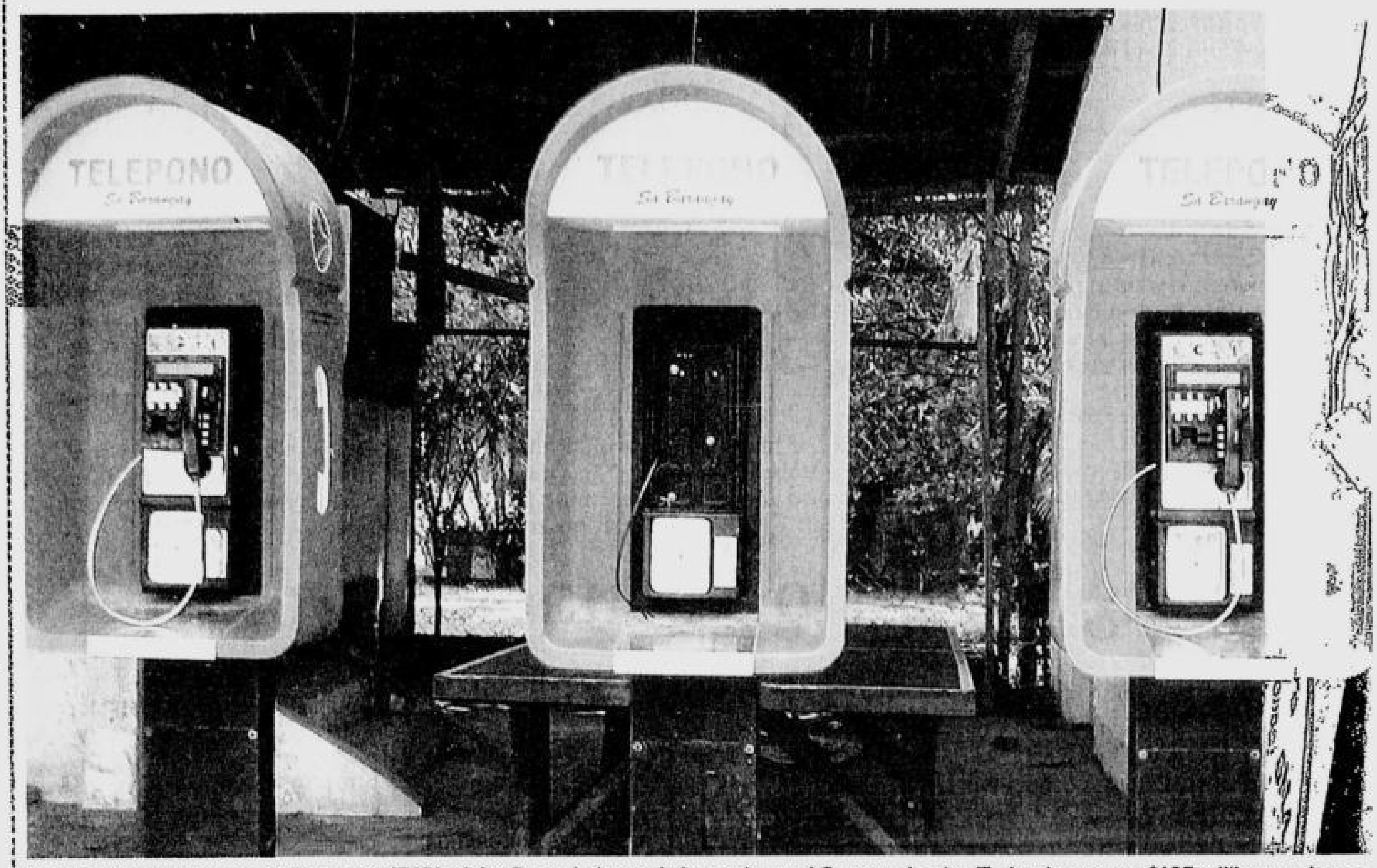
He said this was within the local government's vision to make San Fernando the global gateway by 2015.

Panlilio thanked the national government, especially Ms Arroyo and the BCDA for consulting with and listening to the people in this issue.

Abaya explained in the forum that the original interchanges in Floridablanca, Porac and Angeles Friendship had been scrapped. This was after the previous BCDA administration entered into negotiated contracts after the bidding failed when the proposals were way up the approved construction costs for the 94-km, P27-billion expressway.

Further technical and financial studies showed those interchanges to be not feasible. The Angeles Friendship interchange is located at the end of the runway of the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport in Clark. "Building an interchange there would render the airport useless. And to build one there would cost P1 billion," Abaya said.

The Porac interchange was dumped because there were no ready roads connected to it. Another proposed interchange in Margot, also in Angeles City, was not also possible because this would be near the planned alternative runway of the proposed Clark Logistics hub. This, Abaya said, would entail building a bridge amid rolling terrain. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*



THE FAMOUS Telepono Sa Barangay (TSB) of the Commission on Information and Communication Technology spent $137 million on phones that don't work.
JULIE S. ALIPALA/INQUIRER MINDANAO

Village telephones: A waste of $137M

By Ma. Cecilia Rodriguez and Julie Alipala
Inquirer Mindanao

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—BEFORE THE National Broadband Network deal, there was the government's Telepono Sa Barangay (TSB) project.

The TSB was a multimillion-dollar project started by the Commission on Information and Communication Technology (CICT) in the provinces of Mt. Province, Benguet, Abra, Apayao, Ifugao, and Kalinga, Quezon, Negros Oriental, Lanao del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga del Norte, Nueva Vizcaya and Misamis Occidental, including this city, in 1998.

CICT is an attached agency of the Office of the President.

Little attention

Unlike the NBN, the TSB project appears to have stirred little or no interest at all among national leaders.

Despite claims it was riddled with graft, TSB deal remained untouched by either the House or the Senate.

And so, in the absence of interest among lawmakers, some local officials are taking the initiative to scrutinize the deal behind the TSB.

In this city, the P50-million contract for the installation of a telephone system in rural barangays have outraged opposition figures who likened it to the NBN deal.

> 'It's an ugly orange sight ... These are all white elephants. These telephone lines are all wasted.'

Local plan

The project under the TSB here was conceived in 2003 under the administration of former mayor Vicente Emano and contracted to Supplier Contractor and Network Communications Inc. (Scantel).

Opposition councilors said that of the 50 barangays targeted for the project, only four have actually received the telephone systems.

City councilors Roger Abaday and Zaldy Ocon have openly criticized the deal, saying the awarding of contract to Scantel was highly irregular.

They backed their claim with the annual audit report for 2005 by the City Auditor's Office (COA), in which it was said that city hall failed to comply with auditing procedures with regards to the contract.

No design

"The city general services office (CGSO) failed to completely and promptly submit to the office of the audit team leader the necessary detailed engineering documents for timely review and verification of the contract for the P50-million City Rural Telephone System," the document read.

City auditors said for four years since 2003, they have been calling the attention of local officials to act on the audit report but to no avail.

The COA also questioned the disbursement of project funds, made at a time they were asking for a review of the contract.

In its report, the COA said as of December 2005, P31 million had already been paid to the contractor despite its failure to do its job.

In various radio interviews, Emano, who is now vice mayor, repeatedly denied any anomaly behind the Scantel project.

He said he was willing to be investigated.

Defective

But Abaday and Ocon said there was no need to look farther to determine that the deal was really irregular.

They said that in the four barangays where the project was delivered, defective pieces of equipment were provided, which rendered them useless.

In Salug, Zamboanga del Norte, local officials are also demanding an explanation from the national government over the fate of the multimillion-dollar TSB project there.

Salug Mayor Jesus Lim said they consider the TSB project "as souvenir, a display and orange elephant."

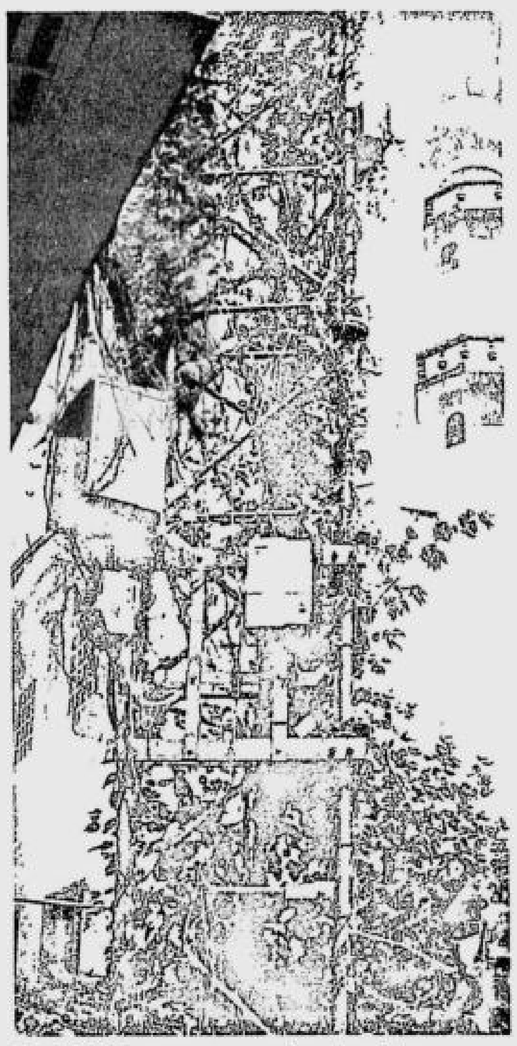
Since 2000, 92 telephone booths had been installed in 23 villages of the town but residents have no use for them.

But unlike officials of Salug and Cagayan de Oro, the CICT said in its website that "all the systems are now operational in provincial levels."

Dead phones

Lim said he did not know of any working unit in his town installed under the TSB.

"It's an ugly orange sight sending wrong impression to the people. These are all white elephants. These telephone lines are all wasted. The funds used for these units are also wasted," Edgar Saldias, a Salug councilor, said.



A TOWER put up to receive signals in Western Mindanao instead became host to vines.
JULIE S. ALIPALA/INQUIRER MINDANAO

The INQUIRER tested some units in Barangay Mucas and found that none worked.

In Liloy, Zamboanga del Norte, 65-year-old farmer Sixto Lagala said in 2000, the phones were working when these were still freshly installed.

Fortunata Postigo, an equipment operator for the Department of Transportation and Communication in Salug, confirmed that most of the units installed under the TSB project were not working anymore.

She said some working units were converted into "telepono sa kabahayan" so that residents could make use of them.

Postigo said with the installation of the lines intended for the phone booths to residences, they were able to provide communication facilities to about 200 consumers within Zamboanga del Norte. *Ma. Cecilia Rodriguez and Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao*

ROUNDUP

Marijuana seized in Cotabato

KIDAPAWAN CITY—About a hundred marijuana plants, uprooted in separate areas here and in Carmen, North Cotabato had been burned before village officials last week.

North Cotabato police director Senior Supt. Federico Dulay Jr. said the bulk of the seized marijuana plants came from Barangay Malapag in Carmen, while the others were discovered in a discreet public lot in Barangay Marbel here.

"Our men and agents of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency are working closely to identify the cultivators of this prohibited source of drugs," Dulay said. The haul, when marketed, has an estimated value of about a million pesos, a PDEA agent said.

Charlie C. Señase, Inquirer Mindanao

Man blasts self with grenade

COTABATO CITY—A man blasted himself with a hand grenade inside his farm home in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat on Sept. 8.

Scene of the crime investigator, SPO4 Ernesto Biboso of the Isulan police, said Bienvenido Perez, 51, resident of Barangay Kalawag 1 in Isulan severed some parts of his body.

Neighbors saw Perez apparently distraught when he entered his home, according to witnesses.

Police are waiting for the victim's relatives to come forward and claim his remains. *Edwin O. Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao*

Most wanted person nabbed

DAVAO CITY—Another most wanted person in Northern Luzon was arrested in Southern Mindanao on Sept. 10, according to Senior Supt. Benhur Mongao, chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group in Southern Mindanao.

This brings to three the number of wanted persons in Luzon arrested in Southern Mindanao, which is composed of the provinces of Davao del Sur, Davao del Norte, Davao Oriental and Compostela Valley, this month alone.

Mongao said CIDG elements arrested Cesar Golle on Monday in Compostela Valley province on Monday.

Golle, he said, faces kidnapping and robbery charges in Northern Luzon and carries a bounty of P250,000.

Orlando Dinoy, Inquirer Mindanao

Village dad slain in S. Kabunsuan

COTABATO CITY—A Shariff Kabunsuan village councilor was shot dead on Sept. 9, the fourth government official killed here in a span of 10 days.

The series of killings prompted the relief of Supt. Paniares Adap and the entry of Senior Supt. Willie Dangane.

Barely had Dangane warmed the seat when Rakman Mohammad, village councilor of Rempes in Upi, Shariff Kabunsuan, was shot in the head and died before reaching the hospital.

Investigators said Mohammad had attended a wedding party here and was going back to Upi when two men on a motorcycle gunned him down along Sinsuat Avenue past 12 noon.

No suspect had yet been arrested since the murders of Macario Calunsag, acting branch manager of the Social Security Welfare office here on Aug. 29, city postmaster Sultan Akmad Kamsa on Aug. 31, and Esteban Sinarimbo, administrative officer of the Department of Public Works and Highways in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao on Sept. 7.

Dangane said the pattern of the attacks was similar but he said police were trying to find out if these were the handiwork of a single group.

Charlie C. Señase, Inquirer Mindanao

3 arrested for robbery in Laguna

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—A businesswoman was killed while two others were wounded in two separate robbery incidents in Cabuyao and Rizal towns in Laguna province on Aug. 30.

Three suspected robbers were subsequently arrested in armed encounters with pursuing policemen.

Police said Blesilda Dorado, 45, resident of Barangay Balinacon, Nagcarlan, Laguna was inside her house at around 6 p.m. when four armed men barged in and ordered her at gunpoint to go to her room. The armed men, who tied the victim's daughter and housemaid, quickly ransacked the house and fled.

"But before leaving, one of the suspects gunned down Dorado who helplessly screamed for help from their neighbors," police said.

At around 8 p.m., police manning a checkpoint in nearby Rizal town flagged down a jeep but the four men on board refused to disembark.

A certain Rojas said when policemen approached the vehicle, one of its passengers pulled out a pistol and opened fire, triggering a brief shootout.

One of the suspects, a certain Nicolas Barola, of Barangay Dela Paz, Biñan, was hit by a bullet in his right leg and surrendered. Another suspect, Fancisco Franco, also yielded to the lawmen.

Two of their cohorts, identified only as a certain Jack and Doctor, were able to escape. *Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Alleged car thief nabbed in Laguna

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Police arrested a suspected member of a car theft and robbery syndicate in Sta. Cruz, Laguna on Sunday, police said Monday.

Police said Mark Anthony Sune, 21, resident of JP Rizal St., Barangay Poblacion, Magdalena, Laguna, who belonged to the Gregorio-Abad-Ruelas group, a local gang involved in vehicle robbery, was arrested from a house in Sitio Maligaya, Barangay Pagsawitan at around 9 p.m.

Sune was brought to the Laguna provincial police station.

Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon

ENDANGERED SITE

Ifugaos told: Decide terraces' fate

By Vincent Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—IFUGAOS are going to choose for themselves whether or not they should preserve the centuries-old rice terraces in the province, Gov. Teodoro Baguilat Jr. said here.

But if Ifugao clans agree that the relics must be preserved, it is the active marketing of an organically grown terrace rice brand that will keep the terraces economically viable, he said.

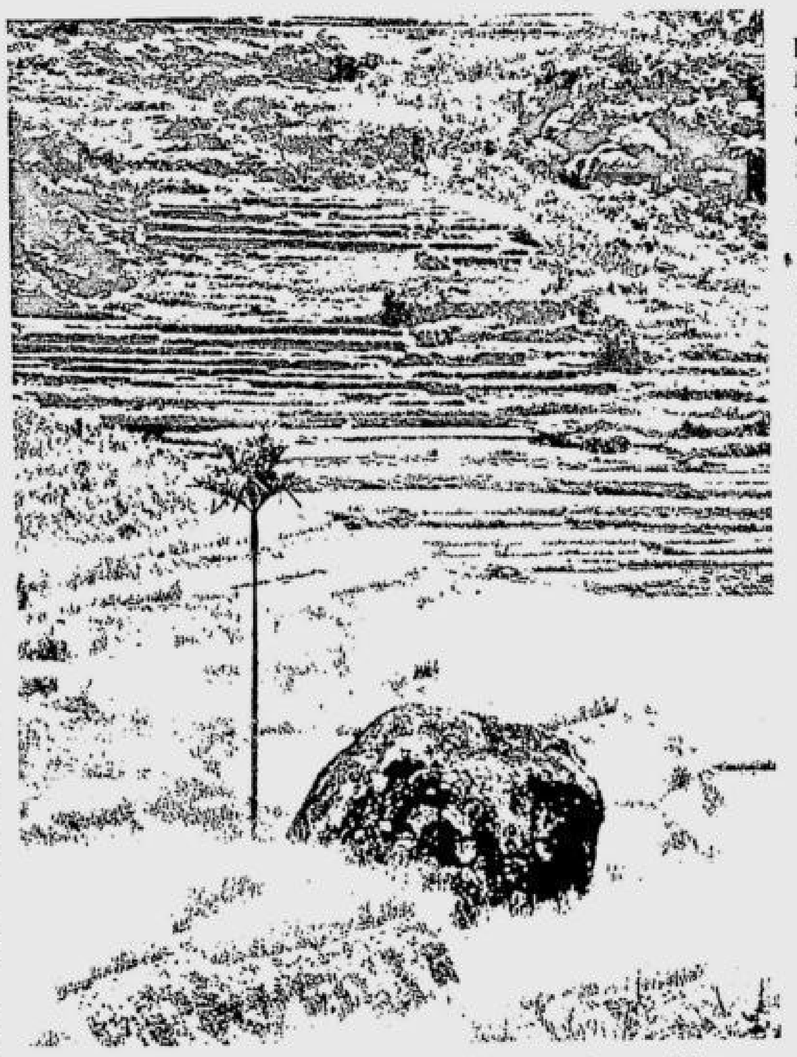
Niche

"Going organic, *kasi*, to me [is] the niche of what is Ifugao," he said.

The latest round of inspection conducted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization said the terraces' disintegration has reached an alarming rate because more terraces have been abandoned.

The terraces' state of affairs imperils their credentials as a world heritage site.

But Baguilat said that is pressure best addressed by the national government, which inscribed the terraces in a list of living heritage sites in 1995.



THE RICE terraces have been put in the Unesco endangered list because of the alarming rate at which it was being destroyed.
EV ESPIRITU/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Endangered

"According to Unesco's benchmark, we have failed so we are still in the endangered list… [They have standards for] the way you construct roads in the Cordillera, the way you fix the irrigation… [and] there have been interventions over the past 10 years.

"[But] with or without the Unesco declaration, it's still ours. *Mahirap nga lang talaga* (It's difficult) because you're dealing with national and international politics."

"But at least there's a growing international community [who believe that] it's up to the Ifugaos [to decide the fate of the terraces]."

> 'Going organic… to me [is] the niche of what is Ifugao…'

Public hearings

The governor said public hearings for a modern land use plan covering the Ifugao terraces would dictate how much the province needs to invest in their upkeep.

The terraces rely on government subsidy to repair and maintain their ancient irrigation system.

But there is no subsidy for clans who have given up farm life for a job in the cities, Baguilat said.

He said he is studying the development of an Ifugao brand because making the terraces pay their own way is a step in the right direction.

Coffee lessons

He said he was inspired by a process initiated by the Figaro Coffee to secure for all its organic coffee supply an organic quality certification from Naturland, a European certifying agency.

Figaro has started harnessing Ifugao's organic coffee. Organic *tinawon* (which means once-a-year in the dialect) is now being exported in small quantities by the Revitalized Indigenous Cordilleran Entrepreneurs Inc. (RICE).

The terraces' small farms make commercial rice production a poor option for Ifugao, Baguilat said.

He said attempts to introduce high-yielding varieties of rice failed because of the inordinate amount of chemical inputs required to keep these varieties fruitful.

Man-made destruction

"*Walang mangyayari sa atin* (nothing will happen to us) if we follow the same formula (for sustaining the relics). We destroy our forests and (everything else has become) commercial," he said.

"That's just a look into the future. This is the inevitable outcome when the trade barriers disappear completely. We would be competing with vegetables from China… *talo na tayo. Isipin natin saan tayo mananalo, ano yung* competitive advantage *natin*? (We lose. Let's think instead of our edge. What is our competitive advantage against China?) Organic," he said.

"One thing good with the [the terraces' world heritage] inscription is that it showed us there is a problem. Every day we wake up to the rice terraces and we always assume these are alive and well."

Mindanao school execs awaiting cyber education

DAVAO CITY—SCHOOL OFFICIALS in Mindanao are awaiting the implementation of the Cyber Education Project (CEP) of the Department of Education and expressed hope it could improve the quality of education, especially in remote areas.

In General Santos City, City Schools Division superintendent Estrella Lariosa said the CEP would really help in addressing the problem on education facilities in the country.

However, Lariosa said it was not certain if it would be implemented in the city.

"But even without the cyber-ed, we already started to venture into ICT through the Project Alert," she said.

Lariosa said, in fact, the city has been chosen as pilot area for ICT in Central Mindanao.

On Sept. 27, she said that schools in the region will already be launching the E-library project, which is actually a step toward cyber education.

In Butuan City, Isidro Biol, regional information officer of the DepEd in Caraga, said the proposed cyber education would be the best alternative to the perennial shortage of books and classrooms in the poverty-stricken region.

"Cyber education will offset the lack of books and classrooms in Caraga," Biol said.

He said that through the project, schools located in remote and hinterland areas of the region would have equal access to learning.

In Iligan City, 23 out of the 24 high schools there have IT facilities, according to Ann Solijon, IT coordinator of DepEd in Northern Mindanao region. ***Aquiles Zonio, Franklin Caliguid and Richel Umel, Inquirer Mindanao***

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given that TVI RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (PHILS.), INC. Stock Certificate No. 001 for 99,999 shares issued to TVI Copper, Inc., Stock Certificate No. 011 for 75,000 shares issued to JMM International Holdings, Inc., Stock Certificate No. 012 for 25,000 shares issued to JMM International Holdings, Inc., Stock Certificate No. 015 for 675,000 shares issued to JMM International Holdings, Inc., and Stock Certificate No. 016 for 225,000 shares issued to JMM International Holdings, Inc. were reported lost. If no contest is received, new certificates will be issued.

(PDI–September 8, 15 & 22, 2007)

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Supply and Delivery of Transportation/Maintenance Service Utility Vehicles in Three (3) Schedules (GSD-07-54317)

1. The **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION (TRANSCO)**, through its **Annual Corporate Budget**, intends to apply the sum of **Philippine Peso 42,800,000.00** for the Supply and Delivery of Transportation/Maintenance Service Utility Vehicles in Three (3) Schedules being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the above project. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. TRANSCO now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the **Supply and Delivery of Transportation/Maintenance Service Utility Vehicles in Three (3) Schedules (GSD-07-54317).** Supply and Delivery of the GOODS required for each schedule is stated below. The description of an eligible Bidder is certained in Section II, Item 5.1 of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Schedule	Particulars	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) in PHP	Delivery Schedule
I	Three (3) units Boom Truck Four (4) Units Light Truck 4x4	23,900,000.00	One Hundred Twenty (120) Calendar Days from Contract effectivity
II	Seven (7) Units Pick-Up 4x4 One (1) Unit Sports Utility/High-Official Function Vehicle	10,400,000.00	Thirty (30) Calendar Days from Contract effectivity
III	Ten (10) Units Passenger Wagon	8,500,000.00	Thirty (30) Calendar Days from Contract effectivity

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is open to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, and organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest of outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines. Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine the bid's responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) determined after the conduct of the post-qualification evaluation.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from **TRANSCO** and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address stated in Item 10 starting **September 17, 2007 from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.**
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address stated in item 10 and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of *Philippine Peso 5,000.00*. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. **TRANSCO will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on October 2, 2007,** ***9:00 A.M. at C.U. Del Rosario Hall A, Power Training Center Building, National Transmission Corporation, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines.***
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the venue of the bid opening stated in Item 8 on or before **9:00 A.M. of October 16, 2007.** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form and in the amount specified in Section III, Item 22.1 of the Bidding Documents, BDS. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be held on **October 16, 2007, 9:00 A.M.** at *C.U. Del Rosario Hall A, Power Training Center Building, National Transmission Corporation, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines.* Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives.
9. **TRANSCO** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the biding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder/s
10. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the BAC Secretariat at the following address

Mr. R. D. Nabong
Manager, Bids and Contracts Management Department (BCMD)
Ground Floor, TransCo Main Building, Power Center
National Transmission Corporation, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road
1104 Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila, PHILIPPINES
Tel. Nos.: (632) 921-2308, 981-2212, 981-2213; Telefax No.: (632) 981-2308

(Sgd.) Atty. NOEL Z. DE LEON
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – September 15 & 23, 2007)

SOUTH COTABATO II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
(SOCOTECO II)

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The South Cotabato II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SOCOTECO II) is inviting all interested bidders to Pre-qualify and to Bid for the following:

1. 10 MVA SUBSTATION TRANSFORMER PACKAGE - 1 SET
   Including its accessories such as instrument transformers for 69 kV revenue metering & relaying and 13.2 kV monitoring, manual disconnect switches for 69 & 13.2 kV, circuit breakers for primary and 4 feeders protection, comprehensive protection relays (universal protocol), primary and secondary lightning arresters, batteries and charger for DC supply and steel structure for 69 kV Gantry and 13.2 kV Bus.
2. DISTRIBUTION TRANSFORMER
   SPECIFICATIONS:
   120/240 V CONVENTIONAL TYPE, ADDITIVE POLARITY WITH EXTERNAL HANDLE FOR HIGH VOLTAGE TAP CHANGER

		NO LOAD LOSSES (W)	FULL LOAD LOSSES (W)
25 UNITS	15 KVA DOUBLE BUSHING, BRAND NEW	35	145
35 UNITS	25 KVA DOUBLE BUSHING, BRAND NEW	56	210
20 UNITS	37.5 KVA DOUBLE BUSHING, BRAND NEW	80	280
25 UNITS	50 KVA DOUBLE BUSHING, BRAND NEW	95	375
10 UNITS	75 KVA DOUBLE BUSHING, BRAND NEW	138	580

3. CURRENT TRANSFORMER OUTDOOR TYPE (RESIN/HARD RUBBER)
   SPECIFICATIONS:
   24 UNITS - 100:5A, BRAND NEW, MADE IN USA OR EUROPE
   24 UNITS - 150:5A, BRAND NEW, MADE IN USA OR EUROPE
   24 UNITS - 300:5A, BRAND NEW, MADE IN USA OR EUROPE
   24 UNITS - 400:5A, BRAND NEW, MADE IN USA OR EUROPE
4. POTENTIAL TRANSFORMER OUTDOOR TYPE - 18 UNITS
   RESIN/HARD RUBBER
   RATIO 8400V/120 MODEL: VEF-24-03
5. CURRENT TRANSFORMER OUTDOOR TYPE (RESIN/HARD RUBBER)
   SPECIFICATIONS:
   12 UNITS - RATIO 50-40-25/5A, TYPE GIFK-24-105
   12 UNITS - RATIO 100-75-50/5A, TYPE GIFK-24-105
   12 UNITS - RATIO 300-250-150/5A, TYPE: GIFK-24-105
6. CUT-OUT FUSE - 400 SETS
   SPECIFICATIONS:
   15KV, 100AMPERES, WITH LIGHTING ARRESTER
   BRAND NEW, GENUINE
7. GE KV2C METER - 20 PCS
   SPECIFICATIONS:
   FM 16S, KT21.6, 50/60Hz, TA 30, CL 200, 120-480V, TV120, 3PHASE
   WITH K & T SWITCH AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT
8. SOCKET BASE 7 JAWS - 20 PCS
9. GE KV2C METER - 20 PCS
   SPECIFICATIONS:
   CL 20, 120 480V 4 WIRES, FM9S, KT 1.8, 50/60 Hz, CA 0.2, TA 2.5, KH 1.8, TV120, 3 PHASE,
   WITH K & T SWITCH AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT
10. SOCKET BASE 13 JAWS - 20 PCS

To be qualified Bidder must have fully complied with the following:
Accreditation Requirements:
- A. Company Profile
- B. Business Registration
- C. BIR/VAT Certificate of Registration
- D. Business Permit
- E. Latest Income Tax Return (ITR)
- F. List of Clients for a period of three (3) years

SUBMISSION TO THE ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE
Bid and Award Chairperson - VIRGILIO B. OCTAVIO

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF REQUIREMENTS - SEPTEMBER 30, 2007.

(Sgd.) VIRGILIO B. OCTAVIO
BAC CHAIRPERSON

Noted by

(Sgd.) ENGR. RODOLFO G. OCAT
General Manager

SOUTH COTABATO ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE II
JOSE CATOLICO SR. AVE., LAGAO, GEN. SANTOS CITY
TEL. NO. 552-4313, 552-4271, FAX NO. 552-4856,
E-MAIL: power@socoteco2.com

(PDI - Sept. 15 & 16, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/ Citizenship	Position
INTELLIRISK PHILIPPINES, INC. 17/F Tower 2, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Ave., cor. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Judy Ann Chaney American	Assistant Vice President, Shared Services
ABOITIZ JEBSEN BULK TRANSPORT CORPORATION 2/F Harbor Center 2, Railroad St., South Harbor, Port Area, Manila	Odd Are Sletten Norwegian	Technical Consultant
AAM-PHIL NATURAL RESOURCES EXPLORATION AND DEV'T CORP. Suite 6/F 601-A S & L Bldg., 1500 Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila	Zhongjun Zhao Chinese	Planning Manager
ICT MARKETING SERVICES, INC. 19F RCBC Plaza Tower 2, Ayala Ave., Makati City	John Langford American	Senior Vice President
AAM-PHIL NATURAL RESOURCES EXPLORATION AND DEV'T. CORP. Suitre 6/F 601-A S & L Bldg., 1500 Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila	Hai Qiu Chinese	Asst. Planning Manager
AAM-PHIL NATURAL RESOURCES EXPLORATION AND DEV'T. CORP. Suite 6/F 601-A S & L Bldg., 1500 Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila	Jianyong Nong Chinese	Technical Manager
AAM-PHIL NATURAL RESOURCES EXPLORATION AND DEV'T. CORP. Suite 6/F 601-A S & L Bldg., 1500 Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila	Zuoyong Liu Chinese	Operations Manager
AAM-PHIL NATURAL RESOURCES EXPLORATION AND DEV'T. CORP. Suite 6/F 601-A S & L Bldg., 1500 Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila	Banfan Pan Chinese	Asst. Operations Manager
AAM-PHIL NATURAL RESOURCES EXPLORATION AND DEV'T. CORP. Suite 6/F 601-A S & L Bldg., 1500 Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila	Minde Zhang Chinese	Accounting Manager
SKY ENGLISH LEARNING PLUS, INC. #24 Panay Avenue., Quezon City	Won Jong You Korean	Operations Manager
INBISCO PHILIPPINES, INC. Unit 1006 Cityland Herrera Tower, Rufino St. cor. Valero St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Tomas Willam Indonesian	Marketing Manager
JGC PHILIPPINES, INC. JGC Phil. Bldg., 2109 Prime St., Madrigal Business Park, Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Hiroaki Iizuka Japanese	Field Engineering Manager
INTELLIRISK PHILIPPINES, INC. 17/F Tower 2, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Ave., cor. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Asha Gloria Francis Indian	Assistant Vice President, Shared Services
INTELLIRISK PHILIPPINES, INC. 17/F Tower 2, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Ave., cor. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Joydeep Hazra Indian	Assistant Vice President, Operations
INTELLIRISK PHILIPPINES, INC. 17/F Tower 2, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Ave., cor. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Punet Suneja Indian	Assistant Vice President, Operations
PEOPLESUPPORT (PHILIPPINES), INC. PeopleSupport Center, Ayala Avenue, cor. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Michael Charles Burger American	Vice President
IBM DAKSH BUSINESS PROCESS SERVICES PHILS., INC. 30/F PBCom Tower, 6795 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Ashish Kanuga Indian	Senior Manager-IT
PERNOD RICARD PHILIPPINES, INC. 8/F One San Miguel Avenue, Cor. Shaw Blvd., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Wilfred Kevin Khong Wai Lee Singaporean	President and Managing Director
BOBOS STORY TOUR PHIL. CORP. Unit 701 T.M. Kalaw Center, T.M. Kalaw St., Ermita, Manila	Dae Gil Lee Korean	Management Consultant
MORE MARITIME AGENCIES, INC. Rms. 204 & 205, V.A.G. Bldg., 46 Ortigas Avenue, Greenhills, San Juan City	Stefanos Galatsinos Greek	Port Captain

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

for RAYMUNDO G. AGRAVANTE
OIC-Regional Director

(PDI - Sept. 15, 2007)

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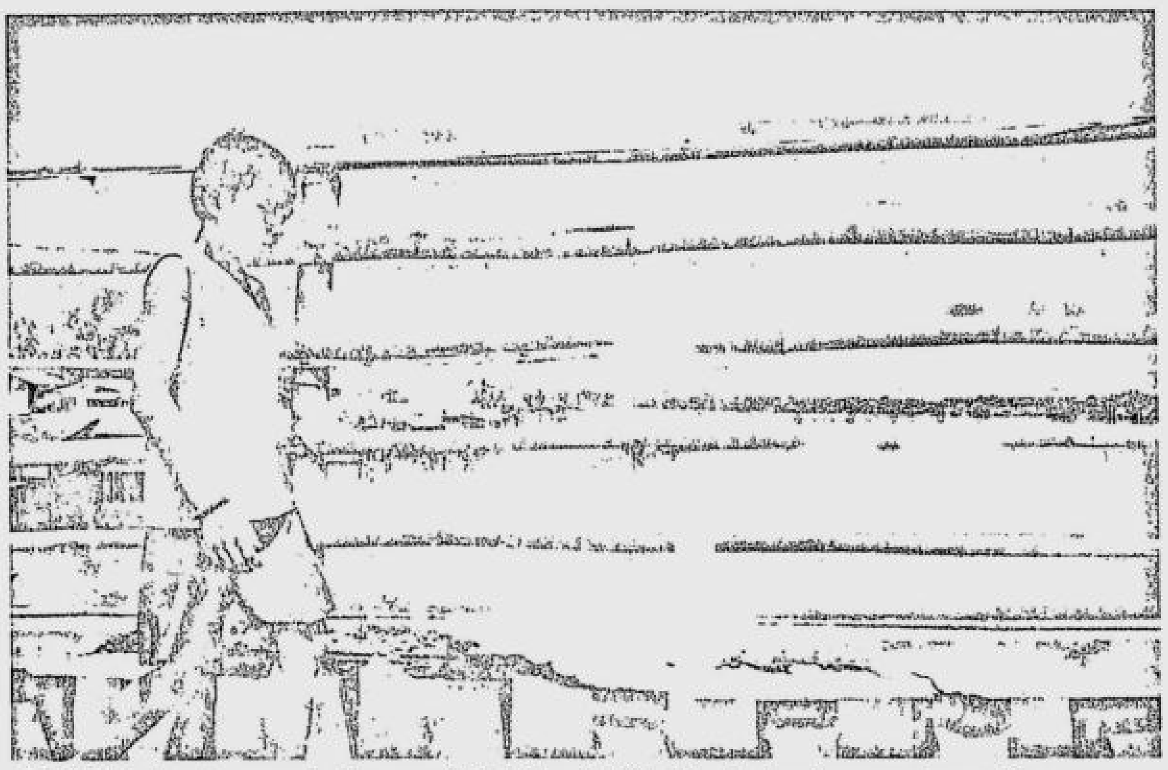
52,000 ha of bamboo plantations neglected



THE USES of bamboo vary. In the case of this bridge in Iloilo City, the bamboo served as a railing.
ARNOLD ALMACEN/INQUIRER VISAYAS

CLARK FREEPORT—BAMBOO plantations in the country, estimated to be at 52,000 hectares in 1998, are "almost all neglected now," reducing the resources for economic development in rural areas and efforts to ease global warming, an official of the Philippine Bamboo Foundation Inc. said.

Romualdo Sta. Ana, president of the PBFI, said the bamboo stands have been neglected because many people perceived these types of grass and their products as "only for the poor."

Low regard

"*Ang tingin sa bamboo napakababa* (Bamboo are seen with very low regard). Houses or pieces of furniture made of bamboo are thought to be suited only for poor folks," he said in an interview following a briefing for Pampanga private sector leaders at the Nayong Pilipino sa Expo Pilipino here on Thursday.

In contrast, China has nurtured five million hectares of bamboo and is adding another million hectare in 2008 to sustain a $2-billion annual export industry that makes food, medicines, beverages, tiles, textile, furniture, handicraft, charcoal, paper eco-homes out of bamboo, Sta. Ana said.

In the Philippines, the top bamboo producers are Iloilo and some parts of Calabarzon and Central Luzon, Sta. Ana said.

Vanishing forest

Felix Velasquez, chair of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry's committee on alternative energy, said the world's standard for forest cover was 52 percent and the Philippines was way below 20 percent.

"We need to hasten reforestation and bamboo are best for this," Velasquez said, adding that bamboo have proven to be an efficient carbon dioxide taker. Bamboo grow to maturity in four to five years and grow well in tropical climate.

China exposure

Undersecretary Edgardo Manda, who is presidential adviser for Southern Tagalog and who is set to return to the Laguna Lake Development Authority as general manager in October, said he has taken up the bamboo development program as his "personal advocacy to provide additional income to farmers."

'Bamboo are seen with very low regard'

It began, he said, when First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo sent him to an exposure trip in Anji, China, during the sidelights of the Southeast Asian Games in 2005.

Manda said the program, which they started in early 2006, is private sector-led, mainly the Rotary Club of Makati, and does not get any funding from the government.

The PBFI, PCCI and Manda have partnered in the program. They proposed to develop a five-hectare "bambusetum" or a museum of living bamboo as a technology demonstration center at the Nayong Pilipino sa Expo Pilipino and in Pampanga, south of Clark.

Ideal site

At the Nayong Pilipino sa Expo Pilipino, the PBFI plans to plant 39 species of bamboo from the University of the Philippines in Los Baños, Laguna, and 27 species from Anji province.

Conrado Perreras, managing director of the Strategic Partners and Alliances Inc., said Clark was "centrally located and accessible to other Central Luzon provinces."

The Clark Development Corp. has not yet officially agreed to host the bambusetum, but Cris Cadiang, general manager of the local Nayong Pilipino wants it as an addition to the attractions at the revived 60-hectare Independence centennial park.

Sta. Ana said bamboo growing can give more income to farmers. Those who cultivate bamboo can earn P57,375 per hectare every after harvest while those who grow coconut, say in Quezon, get returns of only P10,000 to P20,000 per hectare, he said.

Manda said the program has set up a nursery and propagation center in Quezon. According to him, the provincial government of Benguet has agreed to establish one at the Benguet State University for a reforestation program.

In Pampanga, Manda said bamboo could be utilized for erosion-control along riverbanks. The Kapampangan Marangal, comprised of former election volunteers of Gov. Eddie Panlilio, and continuing the good governance-good citizenship crusade, has agreed to sponsor bamboo propagation training in the province's rural towns. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

More E. Visayas kids suffering from malnutrition

By Joey A. Gabieta
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—THE NATIONal Nutrition Council (NNC) in Eastern Visayas reported a double-digit malnutrition rate among children in five of the six provinces in the region.

NNC regional chief Carina Santiago said Eastern Visayas registered an average of 20.44 percent in malnutrition prevalence rate in 2006, which was mainly blamed on poverty.

This problem, she said, was aggravated by the lack of interest among local officials to engage in nutrition awareness campaigns.

No interest

Northern Samar, one of the country's poorest provinces, registered the highest rate at 27.32 percent, followed by Samar at 27.16 percent, NNC records showed.

Biliran and Leyte came in third and fourth highest at 20.92 percent and 20.25 percent, respectively. Eastern Samar registered a malnutrition rate of 19.42 percent. Southern Leyte had the lowest rate of 9.69 percent.

"If the family is poor, naturally food is insufficient. We cannot expect them to have balanced and nutritious foods on their tables. Also, the big size of the family is another reason why we have problem on malnutrition," Santiago said.

She said the lack of knowledge among mothers on the importance of eating nutritious food was another reason there was high malnutrition in the region.

"This lack of knowledge is noted in areas where our information dissemination could not reach," she said.

Based on the Operation Timbang conducted by the NNC-8 last year, 40,615 of the 50,319 children (zero to five years old) that were weighed were considered malnourished.

The situation could be improved, said Santiago.

"This is controllable and not a hopeless case. We can change all this. But we need the cooperation and support from our local leaders down to the barangay level. That is why, when we conduct our advocacy campaign, we reached out to our people in the barangay," she said.

Lack of awareness

Santiago noted that the lack of awareness and interest among local leaders in dealing with nutrition issues partly contributed to the situation.

"There is an apparent lack of appreciation among our leaders on the nutrition program, which is sad. A healthy population could provide lots of opportunities like development of the area," she said.

She said local leaders should implement a campaign on nutrition education and provide livelihood among communities, like gardening, as a means of addressing the problem.

Santiago said NNC has decided to hold an orientation next month among the region's 138 city and town mayors, particularly the newly elected ones, to make them appreciate the importance of having a healthy population.

She said mayors could learn from Maasin City, Southern Leyte as it is one of the region's most active local government units that address malnutrition problem.

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DepEd chief gives in to solons

Will provide copy of MOA on cyber education project

EDUCATION SECRETARY JESLI LApus yesterday acceded to the demands of opposition members in the House of Representatives for an official copy of the memorandum of agreement covering the Philippines and China's undertaking for a $400-million education broadband system.

Lapus confirmed before a hearing of the House committee on appropriations that he signed the memorandum of agreement for the country's Cyber Education Program in Boao, China, and that he has a copy of the said MOA. He said he's willing to give the House panel a copy of the MOA.

"Despite the fact that I've yet to get clearance for this, yes, I'm willing to give a copy of the memorandum of agreement to the committee," Lapus told the budget panel during the hearing of the Department of Education's proposed P150 billion budget.

"What I have is a copy of the reconstituted contract not a copy of those stolen (after they were signed in China in April 2007)," he added.

Cagayan de Oro City Rep. Rufus Rodriguez, one of two congressmen who delivered privilege speeches questioning the propriety of a P26-billion cyber education system, said he expects a copy of the MOA after the DepEd's budget hearing.

"Mr. Chairman... this secretary is willing. The earlier secretaries didn't want to answer questions," Rodriguez said, asking House budget panel chair Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman to allow him to ask Lapus more questions about the deal.

Lapus became the first Cabinet secretary to tackle the details of the controversial broadband projects covered by agreements signed by Philippine and Chinese officials. The Philippines' copies of the agreements were allegedly stolen.

Norman Bordadora

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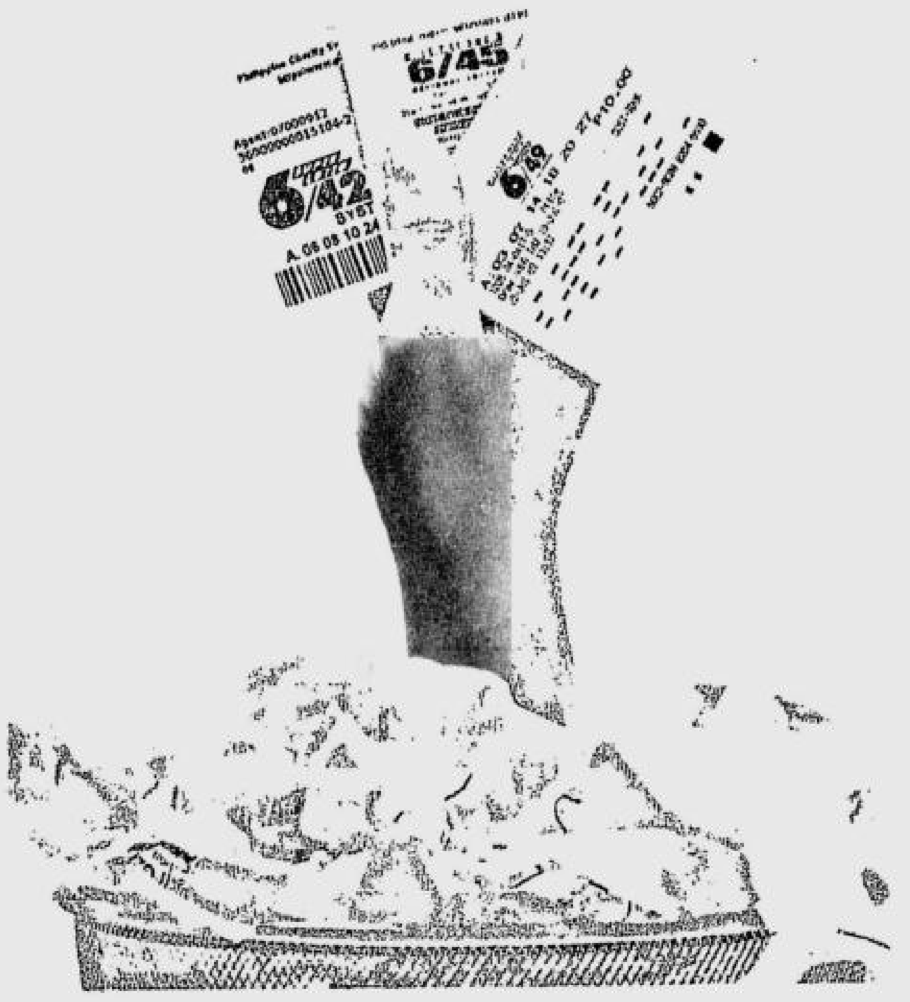

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   C. Save the confirmation message, reference number, and lotto ticket
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Salonga resigns from Sigma Rho

By Tina G. Santos and Santiago R. Alcantara

RAMON MAGSAYSAY AWARDEE AND FORMER SENATE PRESIdent Jovito Salonga has resigned as member of the Sigma Rho fraternity after some of its members were implicated in the fatal hazing of UP-Diliman student Cris Anthony Mendez.

"I hereby resign as a member of Sigma Rho, effectively immediately," Salonga said.

In a statement sent to the INQUIRER, Salonga, one of the most prominent Sigma Rhoans, said that he was resigning "because of recent events in which Sigma Rho has been involved."

Other prominent members of Sig-

SALONGA/ A24

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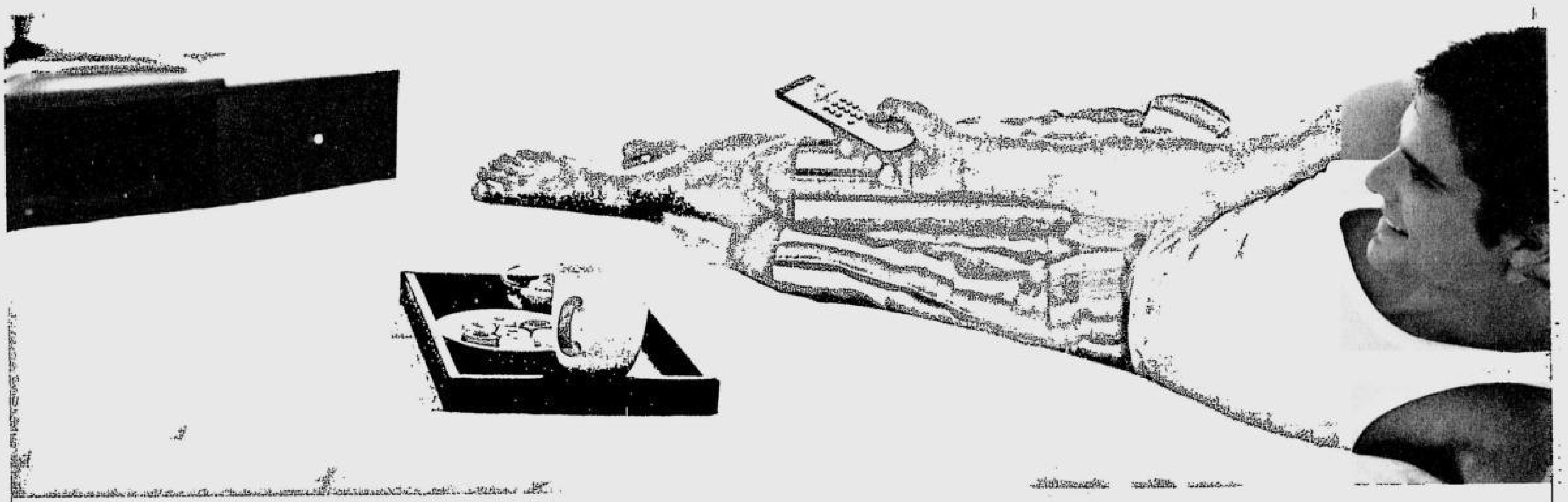

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Police tighten security in Camanava, Rizal

By Nancy Carvajal
and Kristine L. Alave

POLICE IN THE CITIES OF Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas and Valenzuela (Camanava) and in the province of Rizal have tightened their security measures due to threats from communist rebels.

The Northern Police District said they have received intelligence report that two top leaders of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) were sighted in Valenzuela City.

"We are still validating the report of their presence in our area, but measures are already in place to prevent them from exploiting present issues," Chief Supt. Pedro Tango said.

Tango was referring to the arrest of the founder of CPP, Jose Ma. Sison in the Netherlands, and the conviction of former President Joseph Estrada for plunder on Wednesday.

In Rizal, the entire province's police force remains on full alert because of the threat from the New People's Army (NPA), the armed wing of the CPP.

Police in Rizal have been monitoring the movements of the NPA for weeks now.

Tango told the INQUIRER that they have received information that Ramon Ferdinez and Leody de Guzman, both members of the CPP Central Committee, were seen in several areas in Valenzuela.

"All precincts and operating units are already on the lookout for known communist leaders and their activities," the NPD chief said.

He explained that intelligence gathering particularly in the barangays are being activated as a precautionary measure to reduce the vulnerability of police precincts.

Also being validated, Tango said, is a report of possible NPA attacks on PNP stations, government buildings and the assassination of police and military personnel in retaliation for the arrest of Sison, who was subsequently released by the Dutch government for lack of evidence.

The police director said, that as a procedure, all police units are in alert status to provide protection to residents, vital government, private and other installations located in the northern part of Metro Manila.

He added that the police force has been beefed up to strengthen their capability and to preempt any act which could disrupt the peace and order of Camanava and nearby Metro Manila.

In Rizal, the provincial police remains on full alert for possible retaliatory attacks by NPA rebels in connection with Joma's arrest, said Supt. Joel Garcia, Rizal police operations officer.

But Rizal Deputy Provincial Director for Administration Supt. Pierre Bucsit said that the number of NPA rebels in the province is dwindling. He said there was no significant threat from the rebel group in the province.

Bucsit added that they would continue to strictly monitor the security of former president Joseph Estrada in his estate in Tanay, Rizal.

He said that Rizal province police chief Senior Supt. Freddie Panen had recently inspected the security measures around Estrada's sprawling resthouse.

Based on their intelligence reports, Bucsit said there were no threats against Estrada in his villa where he remains under house arrest.

KALESA FESTIVAL

A man rides on his *kalesa* during the Kalesa Festival, an event sponsored by the Philippine Tourism Authority to recognize the traditional horse driven carriage in Manila. RYAN LIM

Lim rejects calls to close Manila Zoo

By Allison W. Lopez

LIM

MANILA MAYOR ALFREDO LIM yesterday rejected calls by an animal rights group to close the Manila Zoo and even vowed to add more animals inside the zoo.

"In all developed cities there's a zoo for the entertainment and enjoyment of children. It's educational because people will see the animals ... In fact I'm planning to add more. We've already asked [officials in] Calauit Island if they can spare us some of their animals there," he said, adding that his office would take care of freight costs.

Members of the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (Peta) staged a protest on Thursday in front of the zoo in Malate to demand the animals' return to their natural environment. The Peta has also supported proposals to convert the Manila Zoo into a sports complex.

Lim said he had already shot down moves to relocate the zoo because it would not benefit both residents and tourists.

"It's already a landmark in the city of Manila. If we're maltreating the animals they can complain, but to deprive the people of enjoyment ... *Hindi lang dapat kasi nababasa sa libro. Maganda yung nakikita mo rin sila at naririnig kung ano yung sounds nila* (They should not only be read in books. It's better if you can also see them and hear their sounds)," he said.

While admitting that the zoo's condition has deteriorated, Lim said he was planning to beef up the zoo's budget to rehabilitate the structure and "fatten up" the animals. With the help of donors, the mayor said giraffes, lions and tigers would be the added attractions.

The lack of space, he added, was also a problem for the 5.5 hectare zoo as much as he would like to widen the animals' areas.

"We don't have enough space. But they can still roam inside. The elephant has an open space. The crocodiles have water in their pen. It's like they are in the jungles," he said.

Lim said animals like snakes and monkeys would have to remain inside cages because of the danger they pose to visitors.

Peta has claimed that animals put behind bars would suffer from "zoochosis," a condition where animals are driven "mad" by captivity.

"That's their opinion, but what's the opinion of the majority? I think it's too much if an underdeveloped country will spearhead the closure of zoos. We'll be hearing howls of protests," said Lim.

Salonga resigns from Sigma Rho

From page A23

ma Rho are former Senate President Franklin Drilon, Senators Edgardo Angara, Juan Ponce Enrile and Iloilo Vice Gov. Rolex Suplico.

Salonga had earlier threatened to resign if it was determined that Sigma Rho members were involved in the death of Mendez.

"I joined Sigma Rho Fraternity, along with my classmate Pedro I. Yap (who later became Chief Justice) shortly after it was founded. At that time there was no hazing as a prerequisite to admission," Salonga said.

Mendez, a 20-year-old graduating UP student, was rushed past midnight of Aug. 27 to the Veterans Hospital where he was declared dead on arrival.

Quezon City police investigators found out that Mendez was a victim of hazing due to "bruises all over his body, particularly on the back of his arms and thighs."

Further investigations proved that Mendez was being recruited into the Sigma Rho fraternity. No one from among its members has since come forward to admit responsibility for the killing.

The National Bureau of Investigation said it would no longer summon students of UP who could shed light on the investigation of the death of Mendez.

Instead, police officials and NBI agents would be the one to go to the university and get the statements of possible witnesses, said lawyer Romulo Asis, chief of the NBI Anti-Terrorism Division, which was tasked to handle the case.

Asis explained that the move was agreed upon during a meeting among the NBI, Quezon City Police and UP officials yesterday.

"UP officials were requesting if the students, particularly the possible witnesses to the case, could be interviewed at the university instead of inviting them over at the NBI, sort of giving them a "comfort zone."

"Of course, we understand that they (UP officials) were just protecting the students, especially those who might receive threats as a result of their decision to come out in the open," Asis said, adding that the meeting was part of the three institutions' cooperative efforts.

SALONGA with Sigma Rho "brod" Drilon. JESS YUSON

Asis added that the UP administration would provide an office where student witnesses can be interviewed by authorities.

For the past two weeks, the NBI has been issuing subpoenas to several UP students and alleged members of the Sigma Rho fraternity who recruited Mendez to be a neophyte.

However, not one of those subpoenaed has showed up at the bureau to give any testimony, Asis said. He claimed that some of them only sent letters "invoking their right to remain silent."

Another NBI source added that the UP administration, which has launched its own probe of the case, wanted to be the first to file a case against those allegedly involved in the incident.

"They requested if they can be ahead in filing administrative case," the NBI source said. "I think the purpose is to come up with expulsion of the people involved."

Once in a while, GMA is funny

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

"GMA FORMS SUPERBODY to fight graft"—Inquirer front-page headline yesterday.

Hahahaha!

Once in a while, the President is funny even when she's being serious.

***

President Gloria says her government honors contracts and agreements "that go through the required processes, despite media attacks."

In other words, her government will ram through the $329-million supply contract for the National Broadband Network (NBN) project. The project has been exposed as being attended by bribery, and was grossly overpriced.

Last Thursday, this corner said GMA no longer gives a hoot about what the press and the public say about her decisions and actions because she has become callous to criticisms.

What Gloria wants, Gloria gets, and to heck with what we—the people—say.

***

Actually, the exact amount of the contract is $329 million.

But the real price is only $130 million.

That's an overprice of a whopping $199 million.

According to sources, here's the breakdown of the amounts that will be distributed to various personalities if the contract finally pushes through:

- $75 million, for the "Big One" and the "Small One."
- $55 million, for the "Old Man" and the boys.
- $70 million, for a big businessman-crony and "party."

***

A knowledgeable source says that so far, the amount that has been given as bribes is $50 million, broken down as follows:

- **$25 million, for the "Big One"**
- **$10 million, for the "Old Man"**
- **$5 million, for "Batman"**
- **$5 million, for the boys**
- **$5 million, for the businessman-crony**

***

The Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) has become a dumping ground of retired generals who are supposed to be the epitome of discipline.

The DOTC top honcho, Secretary Leandro Mendoza, is a retired police general. So are most of his undersecretaries, assistant secretaries and heads of bureaus and agencies under the department.

But it seems insubordination is the order of the day at the generals-heavy DOTC.

Former Philippine National Police chief Arturo Lomibao was recently appointed chief of the Land Transportation Office (LTO), a DOTC bureau.

But Lomibao can't discharge his functions as LTO chief because the guy he replaced, Reynaldo Berroya, another retired PNP general, doesn't want to vacate the position.

Berroya has been given back his old position as assistant transportation secretary with no office to head.

By the way, there must be something at the LTO because guys who are removed from their position refuse to budge.

***

Consumer advocate Pinky Tobiano formally launched the other day her crusade of protecting the welfare of consumers: that means you and me and our neighbors.

Tobiano, a chemist who owns a testing service company, drew the ire of Metro Manila's two water agencies for saying that water coming out of the faucets is dirty.

She also angered some fast-food outlets for urging them to inform their customers how much cholesterol and fats go into their junk food.

By going public in her crusade, she is following in the footsteps of America's consumer-welfare guru Ralph Nader.

It's going to be a lonely war, Pinky, and at times frustrating.

But I know you will plod on because you're doing it out of gratitude for just being alive.

Pinky is a cancer survivor.

'Palma case not yet closed'

THE RAPE-SLAY CASE OF 7-year-old Geraldine Palma cannot be considered closed by the Manila Police District until her nanny Marites Ontog is found, city mayor Alfredo Lim said yesterday.

"*Kailangan yung totoo lang.* (What we need is the truth only) They (MPD) have to be 100 percent sure that the suspects are the real perpetrators. We are holding in abeyance the decision here. The case is not closed because I am not satisfied with the development," Lim said.

Lim was reacting to the "case closed" statement made by MPD homicide chief Insp. Alex Yanquiling after the alleged mastermind, Henry Tesado, in the killing surrendered to the Quezon City police on Thursday.

"I've ordered an ongoing investigation because I'm not satisfied. I'm not swallowing this hook, line and sinker. To conclusively close the case we have to get the maid (Ontog) because she will clarify what really happened," he said.

Ontog was last seen with the young victim before the girl's corpse was found inside a luggage bag floating at the North Harbor, Tondo on Aug. 16. Yanquiling said the other day that they would continue to look for Ontog, who is believed to be hiding in her native Leyte, despite Tesado's surrender.

Just recently, other suspects in the case—Ramil Diorico, Renato "Ric-Ric" Bohol and Joey Igos—were charged with rape with homicide at the Manila Regional Trial Court—but all claimed innocence like Tesado.

"None of them have even admitted guilt. Some surfaced to clear their names because they were in the news on TV. It's natural that they want to clear their names," Lim pointed out.

Previous suspects Domingo Mesias and Domingo Agnote, who later turned state witnesses, were the ones who tagged them and a certain "Berta," who pointed to Tesado as the one who initiated the rape of Palma.

"The question here is the credibility of the witnesses. Are they dazzled by the reward? Because anyone can do anything when money like that is dangled," Lim said, referring to the supposed P1 million offer by the victim's family for the suspects' arrest.

When it was pointed out that the witnesses underwent lie detector tests at the National Bureau of Investigation and passed, Lim could only reply: "Why NBI and not at the PNP (Philippine National Police)?"

Allison W. Lopez

METROBRIEFS

Double-dead meat

OVER 500 kilos of "double dead" meat were seized from two markets in Pasay City, but authorities were unable to arrest the taxi driver who immediately drove off after dropping off the contraband. Members of the city veterinary office immediately burned the seized cargo at the city's slaughterhouse. The meat were seized from a small market along Primero de Mayo Street in Pasay City and another at the corner of Protacio St. and Taft Avenue during a routine inspection. Dr. Rodolfo Bernasor of the city veterinary office said the meat did not have any seal from the National Meat Inspection Commission. *Julie M. Aurelio*

Fake Lacoste seized

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation yesterday seized some 14,000 pieces of fake Lacoste products, including bags and wallets, worth some P28 million during raids on a stall and warehouses in Manila. Operatives of the NBI raided stall A-47 at Plaza Miranda Shopping Mall in Quiapo following information that counterfeit Lacoste products were being sold there. NBI agents also swooped down on the establishment's storage areas on the third floor of Carriedo Center, also in Quiapo. The stall and warehouses are reportedly owned by a certain Chana Cang, a Chinese national. *Tina G. Santos*

Body in garbage bag

THE BODY of a man, believed to be a member of a notorious criminal syndicate, was found stuffed inside a garbage bag in Quezon City. The unidentified victim was between 30 and 35 years old, 5'7" tall, medium-built, fair-skinned, clad in a maroon t-shirt and camouflage short pants, and bore a "Bahala Na Gang" tattoo on his left foot and a heart on the left portion of his back. The victim's body which bore multiple stab wounds was discovered by barangay patrolmen at the corner of Lantana and E. Rodriguez Ave. in Barangay Immaculate Conception, Cubao at around 1 a.m. of Thursday. *Jeannette I. Andrade*

Rotary project

THE 14TH "Alay ng Rotary sa Kabataan" will take place today at the Amoranto Sports Complex. A signature project of the Rotary Club of Kamuning, it is being carried out with the cooperation of the Division of City Schools of Quezon City.

Women Balikatan

THE WOMEN Balikatan Movemen headed by Leonarda Camacho wil celebrate today the 100th birth an niversary of its cofounder, Domin ga Victorio Santiago, at a luncheon at the Rizal Capitol Social Hall. Santiago helped found the Metro Manila Council of Women Balikatan Movement in 1979.

Experts warn of 'big one' after Sumatra quakes

PADANG, INDONESIA—A SEries of powerful earthquakes has terrorized residents in western Indonesia—including another one that triggered a fresh tsunami warning Friday—leaving thousands sleeping on plastic in the hills and each new aftershock triggering a fresh round of panic.

Seismologists warn the worst may yet to come.

Kerry Sieh, from the California Institute of Technology, has spent decades studying the volatile fault line. He is one of several experts predicting a repeat of the massive earthquake that triggered the 2004 Asian tsunami, which killed more than 230,000 people in a dozen Indian Ocean nations.

"No one can say whether it will be in 30 seconds or 30 years," he said. "But what happened the other day, I think is quite possibly a sequence of smaller earthquakes leading up to the bigger one."

An 8.4-magnitude quake that shook Southeast Asia on Wednesday was followed by dozens of strong aftershocks—including one measuring a magnitude of 7.8 and another 7.1—that killed 13 people, damaged hundreds of houses and spawned a three-meter-high tsunami.

On Friday, a 6.4-magnitude temblor hit the area again, triggering the latest in a string of tsunami warnings that was later lifted.

The wall of water that slammed into several fishing villages on the island of Sumatra on Wednesday, swept away nearly a dozen houses but caused little other damage. No one died.

Still, Rukhlan, a 43-year-old fisherman, said residents in Muara Maras were horrified when they saw the ocean retreat and then race back to shore.

"I heard people screaming and yelling, 'Tsunami! tsunami!'" he said. "I ran to find my children, but they had already gone to the hills."

A 65-year-old woman, Asiah, felt weak when the earth started moving beneath her.

"I was having difficulty breathing or walking," said Asiah, who like many Indonesians uses only one name. "I was afraid. My son grabbed hold of me and carried me out of the house."

The three massive quakes have also heightened experts' concerns.

The fault, which runs the length of the west coast of Sumatra about 200 km offshore, is the meeting point of the Eurasian and Pacific tectonic plates, which have been pushing against each other for millions of years. This can cause huge stresses to build up.

"There is a strong indication this foreshadows the big one," said Danny Hillman, an earthquake specialist at the Indonesian Institute of Science. "We all agree there is an 8.5 or stronger earthquake waiting to happen." *AP*

VICTIMS of the recent earthquake comfort each other, in Lais on Sept. 14. AFP

US program on climate is flawed, panel finds

AN EFFORT BY THE BUSH ADministration to improve federal climate research has answered some questions but lacks a focus on impacts of changing conditions and informing those who would be most affected, a panel of experts has found.

The Climate Change Science Program, created in 2002 by President Bush to improve climate research across 13 government agencies has also been hampered by governmental policies that have grounded earth-observing satellites and dismantled programs to monitor environmental conditions on earth, concluded the report, issued by the National Academies, the nation's preeminent scientific advisory group.

Veerabhadran Ramanathan, the panel's chair, said the program's basic scientific efforts had constituted "an important initiative that has broadened our knowledge of climate change."

Among other things, the report noted, the effort has helped resolve disputes over whether the earth's atmosphere is warming significantly or not, allowing scientists to compare data and agree that warming is occurring.

But the report cited more problems than successes in the government's research program. Of the $1.7 billion spent by the program on climate research each year, only about $25 million to $30 million has gone to studies of how climate change will affect human affairs, for better or worse, the report said.

"Discovery science and understanding of the climate system are proceeding well, but use of that knowledge to support decision-making and to manage risks and opportunities of climate change is proceeding slowly," concluded the 15-member panel, made up of scientists from universities and two companies, BP and the chemical manufacturer DuPont.

John H. Marburger III, the White House science adviser, issued a statement Thursday thanking the science academies for the "thoughtful review," and saying that several issues highlighted in the report "are already being addressed."

The program was originally framed by Bush as a way to focus research on pressing issues and produce a broad suite of results in two to five years. *NYT*

MADE FROM TILAPIA, WOULD YOU BELIEVE?
Sudarat Sae-Lim, 30, wears a bikini made from Tilapia fish skin at a Bangkok fashion show on Aug. 26. Smelly fish skin once tossed away or sold to street vendors for cheap food has become a highly desirable product used to make designer handbags, shoes and even bikinis. REUTERS

Hurricane surprises Texas-Louisiana border

HOUSTON—FAST-FORMING Hurricane Humberto surprised the Texas-Louisiana border area on Thursday with a powerful punch that killed at least one person, shut down three refineries and cut power to more than 100,000 customers.

It had been expected to hit land as a tropical storm, but suddenly strengthened into an 137-kph hurricane before coming ashore in a transformation forecasters said was the fastest on record.

"No tropical cyclone in the historical record has ever reached this intensity at faster rate near landfall. It would be nice to know someday why this happened," said forecaster James Franklin at the US National Hurricane Center in Miami.

"It went from 30 knots (55 kph) to 75 knots (138 kph) in 18 hours. That's never happened before," said meteorologist Patrick Blood at the National Weather Service office in Houston.

Humberto struck the upper Texas coast about 48 km east of Galveston in the early morning hours as a Category 1 hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson scale, then weakened to a tropical storm by 11 a.m. and later a tropical depression.

The storm was blamed for the death of an 80-year-old man in Bridge City, between Beaumont and Port Arthur, who was killed when his patio canopy fell on him at the height of the storm, a Bridge City police spokesperson said.

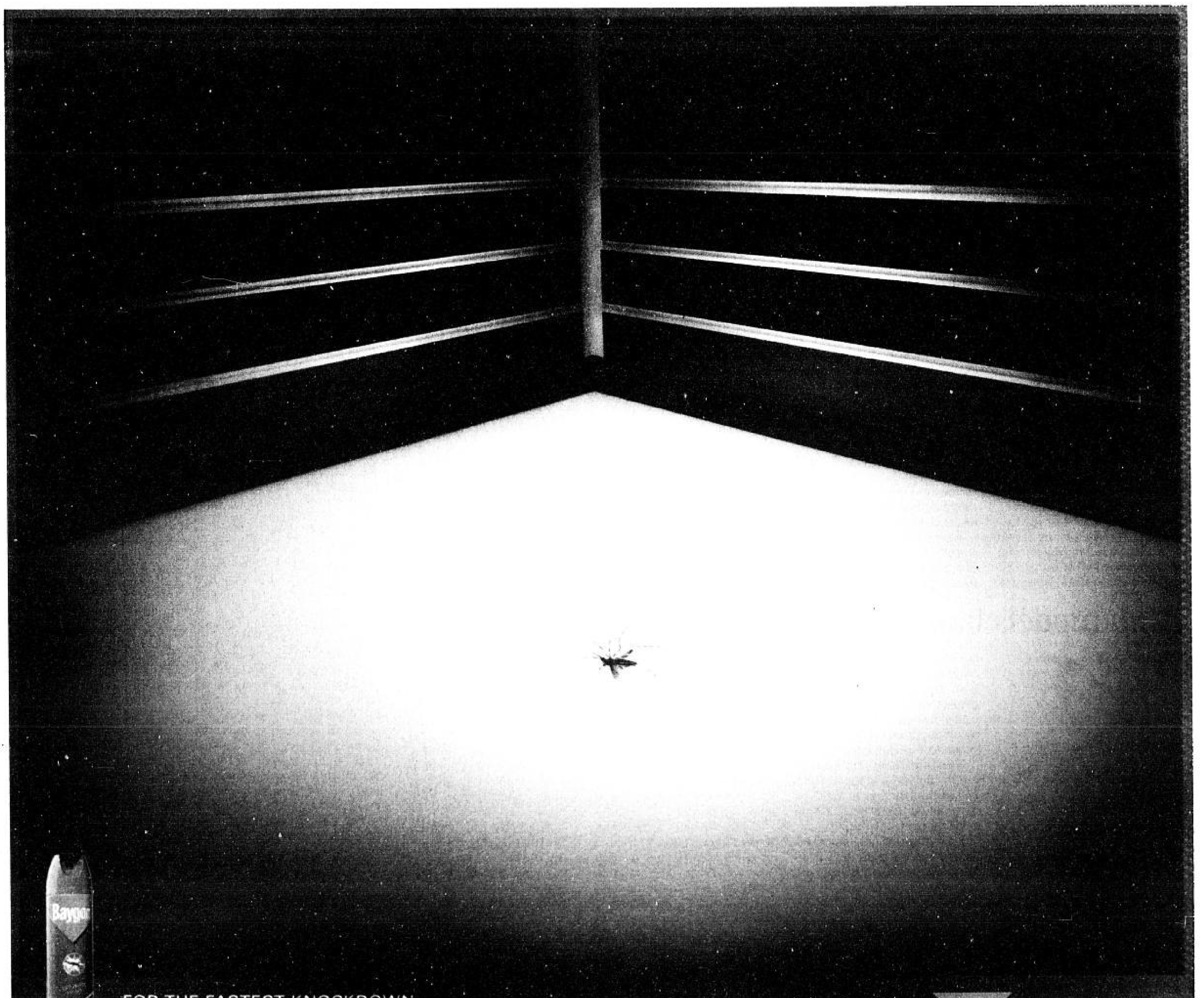
By 3:30 p.m., forecasters said the storm's winds had fallen to 55 kph as it crossed central Louisiana. It was headed eastward, dropping rains up to 30 cm as it went. Officials said a number of highways in Louisiana were flooded.

Part of Humberto's target zone still was recovering from Hurricane Rita, which hit the Texas-Louisiana border in 2005 three weeks after Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans.

Total Petrochemicals USA, Valero Energy Corp. and Motiva Enterprises LLC refineries in Port Arthur were shut down by power outages.

At the peak, power was out to 114,000 customers in Texas and Louisiana, reported the area's main utility, Entergy Corp.

The company said it could take several days to restore electricity. *Reuters*



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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Veteran leads 2-way race to succeed Abe

TOKYO—JAPAN'S LEADERSHIP RACE narrowed to a two-way contest Friday with a party elder who emphasizes the need for closer ties with Asian neighbors emerging as the new favorite to succeed Shinzo Abe.

Yasuo Fukuda, a 71-year-old former chief cabinet secretary and who is seen as a safe pair of hands, appeared to be edging ahead of former foreign minister Taro Aso after behind-the-scenes political horse-trading.

The jostling came as Abe, who stunned the country on Wednesday by announcing his resignation, prepared for a second night in hospital where he has been put on a drip after losing about five kilograms in recent months.

Almost as soon as he declared his candidacy, Fukuda won the backing of the finance minister who withdrew his own bid.

But he faces a fierce battle with the outspoken Aso to take the helm of the world's second largest economy.

"We've had lots of requests from many people and I decided that I have to run," Fukuda told members of his ruling party faction.

"Now really is a time of emergency. I beg you from the bottom of my heart for your warm support."

Aso, throwing his own hat in the ring, urged against a vote along faction lines by members of the governing Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

The party will vote on Sept. 23. Its new leader automatically becomes the next prime minister as the LDP controls the powerful lower house.

Known for his hawkish, conservative views that have sometimes riled Japan's Asian neighbors, Aso has lost twice in leadership elections against both Abe and his predecessor Junichiro Koizumi.

Fukuda, the 71-year-old son of a former prime minister Takeo Fukuda, has in the past emphasized the importance of relations with its Asian neighbors and is seen likely to maintain warm ties with rivals such as China. *AFP*

ASO AFP

FUKUDA AFP

China's high court orders more sparing use of death penalty

BEIJING—CHINA HAS ordered judges to use the death penalty more sparingly by showing leniency for murderers who cooperate with authorities and white collar criminals who help recoup their ill-gotten gains, the government said.

The order is the latest effort by Beijing to reform capital punishment in China, which is believed to carry out more court-ordered executions than the rest of the world combined.

"Capital punishment should only be given to an extremely small number of serious offenders," said a statement posted on the Supreme Court's website explaining the new order. The order was issued to provincial courts on Wednesday, it said, without releasing the full text.

When possible, the statement said, judges should sentence an offender to death but with a two-year reprieve—a penalty often commuted to life in prison if they behave well in jail.

The order said crimes of passion, such as the murder of a family member or neighbor, should not automatically result in the death penalty if compensation is paid to the victim's family.

Those convicted of economic crimes should also receive lighter penalties if they help authorities recover the money, it said.

China regularly continues to execute people for economic, nonviolent and political crimes.

On Tuesday, a former official with the Agriculture Bank of China was executed for taking bribes and embezzling bank funds worth about 15 million yuan ($2 million), according to local media.

In July, the country's former top drug regulator was executed for taking millions of yuan in bribes to approve substandard medicines, including an antibiotic that killed at least 10 people.

While the Supreme Court order called for greater restraint in ordering executions, it still upheld the use of the death penalty as a deterrent.

"We must hand down and carry out immediate capital punishment in regard to heinous cases, with ironclad evidence that result in serious social damage," it said.

China doesn't officially release death sentence figures and international rights organizations do not know the exact number of executions carried out in the country every year.

Amnesty International says China executed at least 1,770 people in 2005—about 80 percent of the world's total. The true number is thought to be many times higher.

An amendment to China's capital punishment law, enacted in November, requires the Supreme People's Court to approve all death sentences, ending a 23-year-old practice of giving the final review to provincial courts. *AP*

SLAVONIC CULTURE
Women and children in traditional costumes watch medieval martial arts during a festival of Slavonic culture in the southern Russian city of Stavropol on Sept. 13. REUTERS

How Japan's ruling party picks its next leader

TOKYO—JAPAN'S RULING LIBERAL Democratic Party (LDP) will pick its next leader to succeed Prime Minister Shinzo Abe through a party poll on Sept. 23.

Any LDP member of parliament can stand if they gain the official endorsement of more than 20 other lawmakers.

To obtain the post of party president, a candidate must win more than half of the total ballot, which will be divided between members of parliament and representatives from regional chapters.

In the event that no one candidate secures more than half of the ballot, the top two go into a runoff to decide the winner.

Some 387 parliament members and 141 representatives from regional chapters will be eligible to vote.

Dovish governing party veteran Yasuo Fukuda and outspoken former foreign minister Taro Aso have emerged as the two leading contenders.

During the week-long campaign period, candidates will spell out their political goals in debates.

But candidates of the party, whose different factions determine the balance of power, often seek support through horse-trading behind closed doors.

The winner of the poll is then almost guaranteed to become prime minister.

The LDP, which had held a majority in both houses almost continually since the end of World War II, has in the past automatically appointed its leader to be the country's prime minister.

The ruling party lost control of the upper house for the first time in its history in July to the main opposition Democratic Party.

But the new leader of the ruling party is still certain to become the prime minister because the LDP and its junior coalition partner New Komeito still control the more powerful lower house. *AFP*

Putin sacks Navy commander

MOSCOW—PRESIDENT VLAdimir Putin has sacked the commander of Russia's navy, taking to at least four the number of top brass dismissed since he appointed a new defense minister, media in Russia reported on Friday.

The Moscow Times, an English-language daily, said Admiral Vladimir Masorin may have angered the Kremlin by accepting a US award in August without advance permission.

The paper said Masorin had not followed the established practice of asking Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov before accepting the Legion of Merit at a ceremony in Washington.

Defense ministry and Kremlin spokespersons refused to comment on the reports, saying they had not yet seen a decree ordering Masorin's departure.

A Defense Ministry spokesperson played down any suggestion of a connection between the US award and Masorin's reported departure, saying other top military had accepted similar honors in the past.

Masorin had reached the age of 60, at which military officers are required to tender their resignation. However, Putin can extend their contracts until they are 65—something he declined to do with Masorin.

Russia's navy will now be run by Admiral Vladimir Vysotsky, the commander of Russia's Northern Fleet. *Reuters*

Thin models banned from UK catwalks

A MODEL **displays a collection of lingerie during a fashion show in a shopping mall in Bangkok on Sept. 13.** AFP

LONDON—CHILDREN UNDER 16 years of age should be banned from the catwalk, and fashion models should be screened for eating disorders, according to a report published Friday by the organizers of London Fashion Week.

The British Fashion Council report, however, stopped short of recommending models be disqualified from the fashion week for being too thin.

Madrid and Milan banned ultrathin models from their fashion week runways last year, and organizers in Paris, London and elsewhere have also come under pressure to do the same.

Catwalk shows featuring designer clothes hanging off the shoulders of lanky girls face increasing pressure to act after models have died from suspected eating disorders. Critics accuse them of glorifying unhealthy body types and glamorizing eating disorders.

The British report, written by panel composed of fashion designers, models and an eating disorder specialist, instead asked modeling agencies to certify that their models had been examined for eating disorders by an accredited list of medical experts.

Up to 40 percent of models may have eating disorders, compared with an estimated 3 percent of the overall population, the report said.

Instead of weigh-ins, the British Fashion Council hopes to combat eating disorders through medical tests, mentoring programs and workshops. Other recommendations backed by the report include criminal background checks on agents and photographer working with young models, random drug testing backstage, more funding for research into eating disorders, and the creation of a model health watchdog.

The report's recommendations are not binding and the council has not said whether it will follow the recommendations. *AP*

$25-M prize offered for unmanned moon shot

THE GROUP WHOSE $10-million prize spurred privately financed rocketeers to send a small piloted craft to the cusp of space in 2004 has issued a new challenge: an unmanned moon shot.

With the audacious new contest comes a much bigger prize—up to $25 million, paid for by Google, the ubiquitous Internet company.

The contest calls for entrants to land a rover on the moon that will be able to travel at least 500 meters and send high-resolution video, still images and other data back home.

The prize for reaching the moon and completing the basic tasks of roving and sending video and data will bring the winner $20 million, according to the contest rules. An additional $5 million would be awarded for other tasks that include roving more than 5,000 meters or sending back images of man-made artifacts like lunar landers from the Apollo program. *NYT*

Sheikh fighting Qaida in Iraq killed by bomb

BAGHDAD—TOP SUNNI SHEIKH Abdul Sattar Abu Reesha, who spearheaded a fight against al-Qaida, was killed by a bomb on Thursday, just 10 days after US President George W. Bush shook his hand when he visited Iraq.

Abu Reesha was killed near his home outside Ramadi, the capital of Anbar province and the region touted by the US military as a success in its fight against the Iraq wing of Osama bin Laden's jihadist group.

He was killed exactly a year after he formed the Anbar Awakening Conference, a group of 42 tribes, on Sept. 14 last year to fight the al-Qaida in Iraq militants.

The attack also came hours before Bush was due to make a televised address detailing Washington's future strategy in Iraq in which he was expected to reiterate the success of Anbar.

The US military confirmed Abu Reesha's killing.

"I can confirm that he was killed in front of his house from an explosion from a roadside bomb," spokesperson Major Winfield S. Danielson said.

Anbar security chief Tareq al-Dulaimi said Abu Reesha "was returning home when his convoy was hit by a roadside bomb planted by insurgents. His car was hit directly."

Dulaimi said Abu Reesha had ordered his convoy to stop so he could help a handicapped man sitting by the roadside.

"Soon after he got back in his car the bomb exploded," the police chief said.

White House spokesperson Dana Perino called the murder an "outrage."

"America has to realize the national security implications of not staying and making sure that Iraq is secure and that al-Qaida does not establish a safe haven in Iraq," she said.

The sheikh "was one of the first who came to the Americans saying he wanted to work with the marines in order to expel al-Qaida from Anbar," added Perino, who signaled confidence that the effort would continue.

Abu Reesha was initially protected by US forces who put an M-1 tank in front of his house and trained his bodyguards and security forces. But Morrell said responsibility for his security later passed to his own people.

"Sheikh Abdul Sattar Abu Reesha was a leader who envisioned a better way for his people. This act of murder will serve only to steel that resolve," said Lieutenant General Ray Odierno, second-in-command of coalition forces in Iraq.

Bush had said during his lightning stopover on Sept. 3 that a reduction in US combat troops in Iraq was possible because of progress in Anbar, achieved largely due to the fight declared by local sheikhs against al-Qaida. *AFP*

SPORTS

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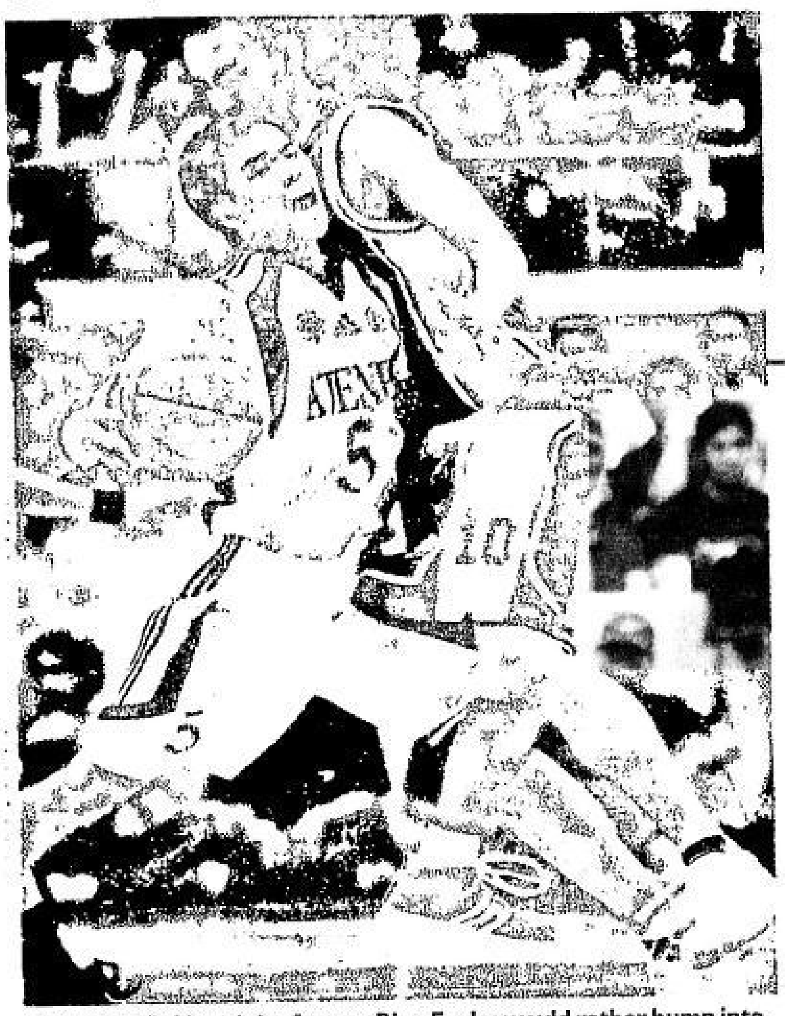
WHAT'S INSIDE
RP Am: Labajo takes out Bayron /A28



JAI REYES (left) and the Ateneo Blue Eagles would rather bump into Rico Maierhofer and the Green Archers when the stakes are much higher. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Eagles hunt down No. 2 berth vs Bulldogs today

NOT THAT ATENEO IS ONE TO RUN AWAY from a fight, but the Blue Eagles obviously would not want to play La Salle again—unless it's for the highest stakes.

The Eagles slug it out with National U at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium today for the all-important No. 2 spot in the stepladder semifinals of the 70th UAAP men's basketball championship.

A loss will pull the Eagles down to a playoff with theirr blood rivals, the Green Archers, a confrontation Ateneo obviously does not want to happen until the semis, where it will have a twice-to-beat edge if it wins at 4 p.m. today.

Ateneo, powered by two elimination round wins over the Archers, is at 9-4 and a win tonight will seal the No. 2 ranking behind the immaculate 14-0 slate of University of the East, the automatic first finalist.

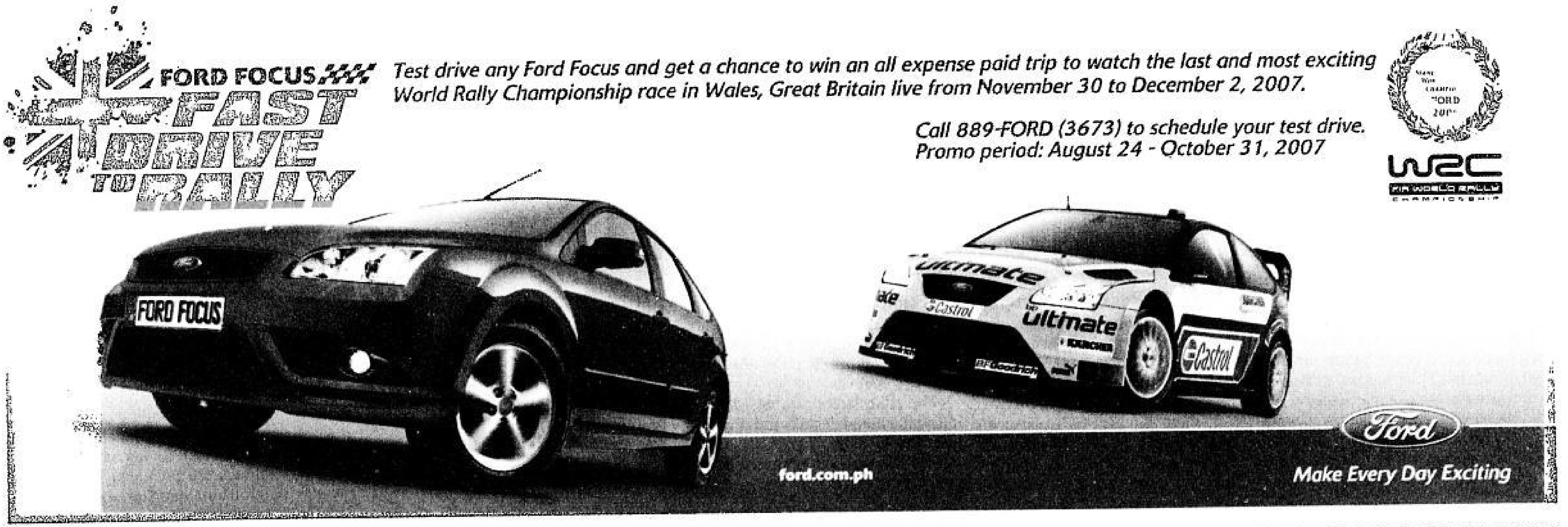
As things stand, No. 2 will enjoy a lot of perks, as the team will play the winner of the No. 3 and No. 4 teams, needing to win just once to advance opposite the Red Warriors.

A win by Ateneo will automatically make La Salle the No. 3 seed.

The final Final Four slot will be decided on Monday when defending champion Santo Tomas and Far Eastern clash at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao.

The Growling Tigers missed making the rankings complicated—and advancing to the semifinals outright after bowing to the Tama-

EAGLES/ A30



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Tankers Piccio, Balinas make waves in Olympic fest

RAFFY LERMA

ILOILO Province's Vince Oliva, 10, wins the 14-under gold over older brother Nikko.

By June Navarro

ILOILO CITY—A NEPHEW OF A FORMER Olympian and a grade schooler from La Salle created huge ripples in the pool for Negros Occidental in Day 3 of the Philippine Olympic Festival Visayas qualifying leg here.

Keifer Alexander Piccio, whose father Jake is the first cousin of Sydney Olympic campaigner Juan Carlo Piccio, collected gold medals in the boys' 13-and-under 100-meter freestyle, 100m backstroke and 4x200m freestyle relay.

MEDAL TALLY (gold-silver-bronze-total): Iloilo City 33-14-23-70; Iloilo Province 24-44-31-99; Capiz 20-12-11-43; Antique 16-10-21-47; Negros Occ. 14-8-3-25; Bacolod City 2-1-0-3; Negros Or. 1-3-1-5; Aklan 1-2-1-4; Guimaras 0-2-3-5; Cebu 0-0-0-0

Joshua Balinas, a Grade 6 consistent honor student from University of St. La Salle in Bacolod, also put on a show by ruling the 100m backstroke and 1,500m freestyle in the boys' 11-under category.

Balinas clocked one minute and 18.62 seconds in the 100m backstroke, a "triple A" rating, according to swimming officials, that automatically qualifies him for the national finals at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex in Manila in October.

Swim chief Mark Joseph was impressed with the performance of Balinas, whose efforts helped Negros boost its stock in the pool with 14 gold medals.

"That was a good swim," said Joseph. "I hope to see more of that kind of performance."

The Negros Occidental tankers also drew big efforts from Krestia Angeli Lacson, who pocketed three gold medals in the 100m free, 100m back and 400m individual medley for girls' under-16.

Lito Arribas (11-and-under 100m free), Nicole Esmeralda (12-and-under 100m free), Kenneth Granada (16-and-under 100m back), Gerard Gelanga (12-and-under 400m IM), Alfredo Ramaila Jr. (15-and-under 400m IM) and Ma. Clestah Sabusap (13-and-under 400m IM) also sparkled for Negros Occidental.

Capiz clinched the title in athletics in the sport's final day after harvesting three more gold medals to boost its tally to 14-9-4 (gold-silver-bronze).

Hanny Jean Delfin dominated the 5,000m run with a 21:01.8 clocking to duplicate the triple-gold medal feat of province mate Jenelyn Progio.

Iloilo City, however, took the lead in the overall standings with 33-14-23 after taking 11 golds in swimming, including victories by 18-year-old Keifer Ticao in the 100m free, 100m back and 400m IM.

In football, Iloilo province thrashed Iloilo City, 7-0, while Cebu escaped with a 1-0 win over Negros Occidental to keep the lead in the under-15 division.

RP Am: Labajo takes out Bayron

By Musong R. Castillo

ILOILO CITY—CURIOUSLY ABSENT FROM LAST WEEK'S NATIONAL team tryouts, Mario Labajo was looking at making his way into the RP squad via the back door.

The 36-year-old, who rose to prominence when he upset the top-ranked Artemio Murakami in the semifinals of the RP Amateurs in Bacolod two years ago, made sure he would create a ripple again this year.

Labajo bundled out defending champion Jay Bayron in the third extra hole of the Final 16 at the Iloilo Golf and Country Club course here.

Upsets were actually the fare of the day with Canlubang standouts Dave Hernandez and young Zannie Boy Gialon providing the loudest noises in the opening round of match play.

Hernandez, the World Amateur veteran who now handles golf operations of the Calatagan Golf Club, showed Asian Games bronze medalist Michael Bibat the door via a 1-up conquest.

The 18-year-old Gialon took out RP team member Ferdie Aunzo, 2-up.

Labajo hit a 7-iron off the tee and again in his approach, landing the ball within 15 feet of the hole for a routine par as Bayron made a mess of his second shot for bogey.

One of the first products of the National Caddies Open program, Labajo will next face Canlubang stablemate Mark Fernando, the No. 2 seed who took out unheralded Junie Visinica, 4 and 3, in the afternoon.

Jay's younger brother Rufino stayed in the hunt, stunning RP team member Jonel Ababa, 1-up in the Final 16.

Gialon and Hernandez, however, fell in the afternoon matches, with elimination-round topnotcher Anthony Fernando ripping Gialon, 6 and 5, and club caddy Rene Menor whipping Hernandez, 5 and 4.

Anthony Fernando and Rufino Bayron slug it out today in the quarterfinals, which Tonlits Asistio also reached after a 6-and-5 rout of Daniel Solinap.

Jong Laput sealed a clash with Asistio after eliminating former RP team member Erwin Vinluan, 3 and 2.

Menor next faces Chepe Dulay, a 1-up victor over Joey Huerva.

In ladies play, Lora Roberto knocked out defending champion Carmelette Villaroman, 3 and 2, and sealed a duel with Anya Tanpinco, a 5-and-4 winner over Ines Del Rosario, in today's semifinals.

The other ladies' pairing will have Sunshine Baraquiel, a 5-and-4 winner over Crystal Superal, and Louise Manalo, who won over Chihiro Ikeda, 5 and 4, for a seat in the title match.

GIANT-KILLER: Joseph Labajo repeats 2005 feat with stunning win over Jay Bayron. JUN RAPANAN / CONTRIBUTOR

Air21 waits for Jawo OK as mentor

By Musong R. Castillo

THE RETURN OF THE LIVING LEGEND, Robert Jaworski, to the PBA could happen next week.

Air21 is just awaiting word from Jaworski on its offer to have the charismatic former senator coach the Express in the coming PBA season.

Acting coach Bo Perasol said management has no other candidate in mind for the job and that the team is anticipating a positive response from Jaworski, who left the league in 1998.

"They (management) have no other coaches in mind," Perasol told the INQUIRER in a text message.

Meanwhile, Purefoods guard Paul Artadi is reportedly being used as trade bait, but the Tender Juicy Giants have found no takers so far.

Artadi and coach Ryan Gregorio reportedly had a falling out.

In a pre-season game yesterday, Talk 'N Text blasted Welcoat, 123-109, behind the 20 points each of Jay Washington and Mac Cardona.

WORLD TITLE CRACK

Batawang downplays chances vs Solis

By Recah Trinidad

LOS ANGELES—HE WAS VERY THANKFUL but Cebu's Bert Batawang took a step back and gave himself only an even chance of winning when told yesterday that his mandatory challenge for the IBF light flyweight championship has been officially set for Oct. 4 in Las Vegas.

"*Mahirap sabihin, basta doon ko na lang ipakikita sa laban* (It's hard to say, I'll just show my capability during the title fight)," the 35-year-old challenger told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Last week, Batawang said he had a good chance of dethroning Ulises Solis after viewing a fight video of the champ via a YouTube feed on a borrowed laptop computer.

Batawang and trainer Jeremiah Quijano had claimed there was nothing superior or extraordinary "in the amateur fighting style of Solis," whose alleged shoulder injury caused a cancelation of the original Sept. 16 title fight.

Yesterday, without making a complete turnaround, Batawang humbly downplayed his chances.

Trainer Quijano also spoke cautiously, while stressing the best he could do was assure Batawang is in tip-top shape.

"*Wala naman problema, todo kundisyon, pero mahirap magsalita nang tapos* (He's at his best, but we can't promise a sure win)," explained the soft-spoken trainer, who has drilled Batawang with no letup despite at least two successive big cancelations.

PHILBOXING.COM

LONG wait is over for Bert Batawang.

Batawang, who suffered a cut on the eyebrow the other week, will spar eight rounds today against Rodel Mayol, whom Solis defeated in a Chicago title bout on Aug. 4.

Batawang's first big fight here as member of the RP team in the Boxing World Cup in Sacramento fell through last month after Mexican Gerson Gerrero was discovered with a torn retina two days before the bout.

Batawang said that, prior to the World Cup, there was another scheduled title eliminator last May, against Mexican Francisco Rosas, that had to be canceled.

Cooling his heels at the 3C (not Tracy as earlier reported) off Vermont Avenue here, Batawang thanked and extolled his manager, Sammy Gello-ani, for finally clinching a title shot for him.

Batawang, despite regular full meals, weighed 111 lb, only three pounds over the light flyweight limit, yesterday.

A Mexican bantamweight has been called in to add depth to his sparring, whose number of rounds will be increased next week.

The Solis-Batawang card will be aired in the United States by Versus Channel.

The bout, to be held at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, marks Batawang's first crack at a world title after 17 years as a pro, and his first appearance in Sin City.

Batawang (50-6, 34 KOs), who has been training for almost three months in California, reports to Freddie Roach's gym daily and regularly spars with Mayol, who has been giving him pointers on how to fight Solis.

The 26-year-old Solis (25-1-2, 19 KOs) will be making the sixth defense of his IBF title.

If victorious against Solis, Batawang will become the fourth Filipino to hold a world title after IBF minimum weight champ Florante Condes, IBF/IBO flyweight king Nonito Donaire and WBO bantam ruler Gerry Peñalosa.

With a report from Salven L. Lagumbay

SPORTSWATCH

Hitachi Criterium Grand Prix goes to Tarlac

CENTRAL LUZON CYCLING FANS CONVERGE IN TARLAC CITY TOMorrow for the Mayor Genaro Mendoza Cup, fourth leg of the Hitachi National Criterium Grand Prix. Project events director Ric Rodriguez thanked Mendoza for staging the races. "It is our privilege and pleasure to bring this event to Tarlac, a recognized cycling hub," said Leo Hsieh, Hitachi Airconditioning Group president. The tough criterium races also sponsored by Smart Buddy and organized by Pro Ad Concepts, Inc. in coordination with the Tarlac City Sports headed by Arnold Rodriguez will be staged on a 3.8-kilometer circuit along the Ninoy Aquino Boulevard.

Pampanga's Canlas dominates PCAP stagfest

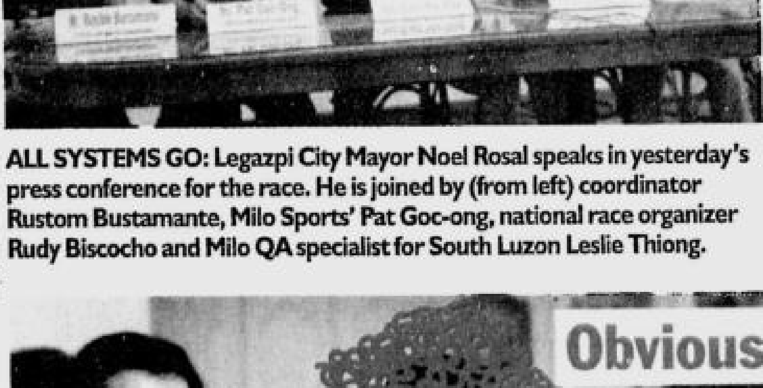
EFREN CANLAS OF PAMPANGA RULED THE OPENING LEG OF THE Pinoy Cockers Association of the Philippines (PCAP) 5-Stag Derby last Sept. 5 at the Makati Coliseum. Canlas relied on the high-breaking Golden Lemon stags acquired from Richard Kelly of Alabama in winning the stagfest and took the early lead in the PCAP Cocker of the Year race. Nato Lacson with his RSL entry finished second. The derby series' second leg unfurls on Monday at Makati Coliseum with some 70 fights.

SJC anniversary derby finals kick off today

THE CLIMACTIC FINALE OF SAN JUAN COLISEUM'S 2ND ANNIVERsary 6-Stag Derby begins at 2 p.m. today with 94 fights lined up and with Sagupaan Complexor 3000 as main backer. After two fight days, only nine out of 125 participants remained unbeaten with three wins each: Richard Bates, Eric dela Rosa, Hermie Herrera, Boy Bata, Pepito Ngo, Rita Soriano, Buddy Robregado and host Rodolfo Pineda (two entries). The champion will receive a silver cup and a guaranteed prize of P2 million.

PSG annual stag battles get under way

THE FIRST BATCH OF 75 PARTICIPANTS PLUNGES INTO ACTION IN THE Annual PSG 5-Stag Derby which gets going at 4 p.m. today at Pasig Square Garden. Now on its 13th edition, the event stakes a guaranteed prize of P1.2 million and is hosted by veteran breeder Edgar Coronel. The second round of eliminations is set Monday while the championship battles follow on Sept. 21. For inquiries, call 646-5858 or 646-5828.



ALL SYSTEMS GO: Legazpi City Mayor Noel Rosal speaks in yesterday's press conference for the race. He is joined by (from left) coordinator Rustom Bustamante, Milo Sports' Pat Goc-ong, national race organizer Rudy Biscocho and Milo QA specialist for South Luzon Leslie Thiong.

Canada, Vargas defend Milo run titles Sunday

ALVIN CANADA AND ANALIZA VARGAS stake their titles when the Legazpi City leg of the 31st National Milo Marathon elimination kicks off on Sunday in front of City Hall.

Organized by the provincial and city sports council with Louie Bello, executive assistant to the city mayor as project chair, the Albay leg has drawn 4,000 runners, with 10 schools participating in the cheer dance competition.

The race is the 15th stop of the 22 legs leading to the grand finals of the country's longest running footrace that began in 1974 with Numeriano Titong, a golf caddy, winning the inaugural edition three decades ago.

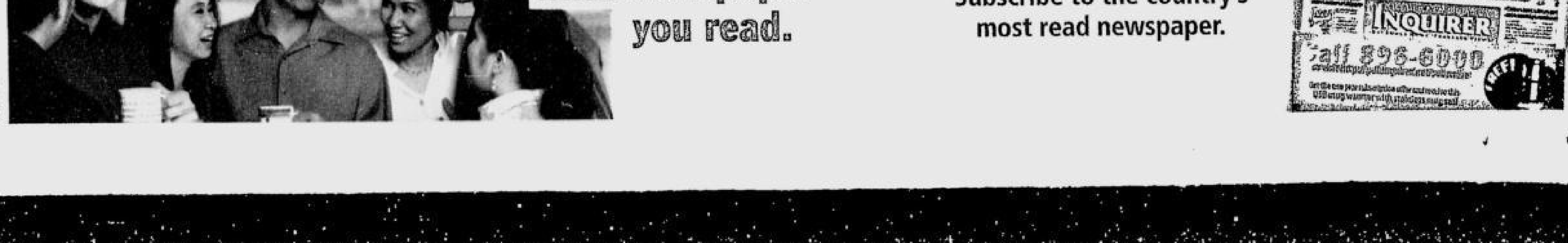
Albay Gov. Joey Sarte Salceda, Vice Gov. Brando Sael and Legazpi Mayor Noel E. Rosal have been invited to fire the starting gun for the 21K, 5K and 3K events at exactly 6 a.m. They will also be on hand to award the prizes to top winners at the awards rites at 7:30 a.m.

Canada and Vargas are expected to encounter tough opposition from veterans and up-and-coming runners who are out to end their reign as king and queen of the half marathon in Albay.

Crack runners from six provinces comprising the Bicol region are seeing action in the main 21-K race that will pass through Legazpi's major thoroughfares.

The champion in the men's and women's division will win P10,000 each and, along with the runner-up and third placer, earn a trip to the grand finals, featuring provincial champions, on Nov. 18 in Manila.

"I expect an interesting race," said Milo Events executive director Pat Goc Ong.



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3 Iranian GMs, 4 others join Asian chess tourney

By Roy Luarca

GRANDMASTER EHSAN GHAEM Maghami and six other titled Iranian players are joining the 6th Asian Individual Chess Championships set Sept. 19-30 at the Cebu International Convention Center in Mandaue City, Cebu.

Joining Maghami, who totes an Elo rating of 2610, are fellow GMs Ehsan Moradiabadi (Elo 2540) and Amir Bagheri (2495), International Master Morteza Mahjoobzrdast (2479) and Fide Masters Homayoon Tamijani (2391), Javad Moghadam (2493) and Mehrdad Ardeshi (2407).

The Iranians' confirmation raised to 58 the number of foreign entries vying for the $40,000 total purse and ten slots to the World Chess Cup slated in Kalmykia from Nov. 23-Dec. 16.

Heading the cast in the 11-round tournament are Turin Olympiad runner-up China, which is fielding in 13 players, eight of whom are GMs, and Asian powerhouse India, which is sending 14 players, including seven GMs and four IMs.

Super GMs Nia Hua (Elo 2681) and Zhang Pengxiang (Elo 2649) spearhead the Chinese juggernaut while GMs Surya Shekhar Ganguly (Elo 2586), Chanda Sandipan (2563) and Abhijit Kunte (2519) will banner the Indians.

Other GMs in the fold include three Bangladeshis, three Vietnamese and two Indonesians.

Veteran GMs Eugene Torre and Rogelio "Joey" Antonio will be at the forefront of the 22-man strong local challenge.

Also expected to contend are IMs Wesley So, Oliver Dimakiling, Hamed Nouri and Julio Cartalino Sadorra.

Notable absentees are GM Mark Paragua, who is still campaigning in the United States; and GMs Nelson Mariano and Buenaventura "Bong" Villamayor, who were unable to secure leaves from their work as chess instructors in Singapore.

Other GMs in the tournament organized by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines are Chinese GMs Wang Hao (Elo 2624), Zhou Jiangchao (2572) and Zhao Jun (2558); Indonesian GMs Utut Adianto and Susanto Megaranto; Vietnamese GMs Nguyen Anh Dung and Tu Hoang Thong ; Singaporean Wu Shaobin; Bangladeshis Niaz Murshad and Enamul Hossain and Uzbehistan's Anton Fillipov.

NCFP president Prospero "Butch" Pichay and secretary-general Mayor Abrahma "Bambol" Tolentino lauded the support of the Cebu government under Gov. Gwen Garcia and local organizers led by Boojie Lim and National Master Roger Abella for the interest generated by the event.

Meanwhile, an arbiters' seminar organized by the Fide (World Chess Federation) will be held at the same venue from Sept. 20-25.

McLaren fined $100M

Loses constructors' points in 'spy' case aftermath

PARIS—SPYING DOESN'T PAY, except the other way around.

Accused of using leaked secret data from its main rival Ferrari, the Formula One team McLaren was hit with a record $100-million fine Thursday by the World Motor Sport Council in the biggest scandal to hit auto racing's premier circuit.

Although McLaren drivers Lewis Hamilton and Fernando Alonso escaped punishment Thursday, the espionage claims have rocked the sport and tainted McLaren's lead in the drivers' standings.

The team, also stripped of its constructors' points, already was battling accusations that it had used team orders to decide which driver would win races this season. Now, it is facing a new crisis.

The F1 case broke in July when a 780-page technical dossier on Ferrari cars was found at the home of McLaren's chief designer, Mike Coughlan, who was later suspended. Ferrari mechanic Nigel Stepney, who allegedly supplied the documents, was fired.

McLaren escaped censure by the World Motor Sport Council in July due to insufficient evidence that Ferrari's technical documents were misused. But Honda's revelations that Stepney and Coughlan had approached team boss Nick Fry in June about joining the F1 team whipped up further concerns over Ferrari's intellectual property.

The $100-million fine imposed on McLaren is 40 times larger than the previous F1 record ($2.5 million).

Still, Dennis argued the fine is effectively halved because McLaren doesn't have to forfeit any revenue it's earned this season. He added that the financial strength of McLaren also would help absorb the impact of the fine.

"We still effectively have as an offset the revenue from the point earned to date," he said. "That will probably effectively halve the size of the check that we ultimately have to sign—if we ultimately accept this fine.

"We turn over roughly $450 million to $500 million a year and we are debt free, so we're a very strong company (with) phenomenal growth."

And it likely won't cost McLaren the Formula One drivers' title.

Hamilton and Alonso are well ahead of Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen and Felipe Massa with four races left.

Hamilton, in his debut Formula One season, leads with 92 points, followed by two-time champion Alonso with 89. Raikkonen (74) and Massa (69) are third and fourth. And Alonso and Hamilton finished 1-2 in Sunday's Italian GP—at Ferrari's home track of Monza.

FIA said it did not penalize McLaren's drivers "due to exceptional circumstances" because they provided evidence in exchange for immunity.

The World Motor Sport Council ruled in July that McLaren was guilty of fraudulent conduct for possessing the Ferrari documents, but didn't punish the team because there was insufficient evidence the material was misused. *AP*

TIGER Woods watches an approach in one of the holes he finished for the day. Woods was down by four after a rain-interrupted first round. REUTERS

Tiger lurking

ATLANTA—TIM CLARK TIED THE COURSE record at East Lake Country Club with an 8-under 62 Thursday in the first round of the US Tour Championship, capitalizing on greens made soft by extra attention by tour officials and a three-hour storm delay.

Only 10 players finished the first round, and there was no guarantee his 62 would hold up.

Tiger Woods, who can win the FedEx Cup with a victory at the Tour Championship, birdied his first three holes and was at 4 under with seven holes still remaining.

Clark qualified for the US Tour Championship thanks to a closing 67-67 at last week's BMW Championship, where he tied for fifth and barely cracked the top 30 in the US PGA Tour's "playoffs" to earn a spot in Thursday's starting field. *AP*

Russia, Spain book Fiba Europe semifinal tickets

MADRID, SPAIN—TONY PARKER missed a game-tying free throw with seven seconds to play, and Russia went on to beat France 75-71 and reach the semifinals of the European Basketball Championship for the first time in 10 years.

Parker missed his second attempt before Zakhar Pashutin made two free throws at the other end for Russia.

Parker went back to the line on the ensuing possession, making his first attempt before purposefully missing the second. But Russia grabbed the rebound and Sergey Monya hit both free throws after being fouled with one second left on the clock.

"Of course I'm—we're—disappointed. The semis were the minimum we were aiming for," the San Antonio Spurs guard said. "Every time you lose it's hard. You can't compare one loss to another."

Spain moved a step closer to becoming only the third team to claim the European crown while holding the world title with a 83-55 win over Germany.

Jose Calderon scored 17 to help Spain avenge a 74-73 semifinal loss to the Germans two years ago in the European Championship.

"Spain is the heavy favorite. They've got a lot going for them. They've got a lot of shooters [and] we didn't fight the way we should have fought for our country," German forward Dirk Nowitzki said. "We cracked up a couple of times and didn't stick together and fight like we were supposed to fight."

Spain used its fast break to double a 13-point halftime lead to 64-38 with 1:23 to go in the third quarter, limiting Nowitzki, who was averaging 24.3 points per game, to four field goals and a tournament-low 11 points.

Rudy Fernandez and Juan Carlos Navarro added 12 points apiece for the hosts.

"We're exactly where we want to be. The team did an extraordinary job in all aspects, from covering each other on defense to getting out. It was a real team concept," Spain coach Pepu Hernandez said. "Really, there were times when you looked out on the court and saw something spectacular going on."

Parker's 3-pointer with 1:26 to play had tied it at 69-69, but Jon Robert Holden's two free throws on the following play put Russia ahead for good. *AP*

ANDREI Kirilienko of Russia chases down a loose ball. AFP

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RP team standouts strike

By Romina S. Austria

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL TEAM TOPPED their respective seniors events but two top seeds in the juniors division took early exits yesterday in the 2007 Samsung Best of the Best National Taekwondo Championships at the Glorietta Activity Center in Makati City.

RP team's Manuel Rivero Jr., Elaine Alora and Susan Catalan pounded out contrasting wins to add to the easy victory of national pool member Gerrielyn Aranzano late Thursday.

But junior finweight top seed Kenz Carlo Santos and flyweight Alexander Varela were ousted.

Rivero, bronze medalist in the 2006 Doha Asian Games, had to go through sudden death at 2-2 before beating La Salle's Dennis Resaba in the senior men's featherweight final.

Alora also took great efforts in the last round to beat UP-Diliman's Sheena Mae Perlas, 5-4, and bag the senior ladies bantam/lightweight gold.

St. Benilde bet Aranzano bested UP Diliman's Edhlie Arellano, 7-0, in the senior ladies finweight final while Catalan waylaid UP Diliman's Abigail Rustia, 5-1, to snatch the flyweight gold.

Santos of La Immaculada Concepcion fell to Bataan's Wendell Dacanay, 5-2, in the quarterfinals. Earlier, he survived a 1-1 standoff with FEU's Mark Jim Callos to win in sudden death.

Varela was a no-show in his fight against second-ranked Leonardo Avenido of Davao.

Dacanay advanced to the semifinals against Malolos' Aaron Luke Gabriel Abiera while Avenido next fights DLSZ's James De Luzuriaga.

Other seniors winners late Thursday were San Beda College's Jose Manuel Enriquez who barely escaped Emmanuel Alivio Jr., 2-1, of UST to cop the bantam gold and Carlos Padilla who won in sudden death after a 2-2 count over Region 2's Ernesto de Guzman in the flyweight finals.

Marlon Avenido produced a gold medal for UST in the light welter category with a 5-1 victory over teammate Paulo Angelo and St. Benilde's Edison Bagaipo outclassed Raymond Villapa of Defenders, 1-0, in the finweight final.

REGION 1's Devi John Singson (right) Region 1 lets loose a turning side kick against Gerald Gonzales of Central Gym in their bantamweight fight. Singson won, 6-0. ROMY HOMILLADA

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Squires seals NCAA title duel versus Staglets

By Marc Reyes

GAMES WEDNESDAY
(*Araneta Coliseum*)
2 p.m.—Letran vs San Sebastian (Jrs)
4 p.m.—Letran vs San Beda (Srs)

BETTER LATE THAN never.

Letran, delayed by a persistent San Beda side, finally made it to the NCAA juniors basketball finals following a 96-92 victory yesterday at the Arena in San Juan.

Guard Philip San Jose unloaded 15 of his 26 points in the third quarter as the Squirers booked a trip to the best-of-three championship series with early qualifier and two-time defending champion San Sebastian.

"Defense did it, especially in the first half," said Letran coach Elmer Latonio. "I'm glad that the boys didn't let up."

The Squires are thus back in the finals after a three-year absence.

The scores:

LETRAN 96—San Jose 26, Ke. Alas 18, Noble 15, Kr. Alas 14, Munsayac 8, Romeo 6, Khobuntin 5, Reforsado 4.

SAN BEDA 92—Salva 25, Panaligan 20, Revilla 16, Lobaton 12, Dela Cruz 6, Bernas 5, Babilonia 4, Altamirano 2, Monteclaro 2, Ayala 0, Del Rosario 0, Asinas 0.

Quarters: 23-27, 60-45, 74-63, 96-92

Bustamante, Alcano lead faves' romp

TWO-TIME DEFENDING CHAMPION Francisco "Django" Bustamante and double world champion Ronato Alcano routed their foes yesterday to lead the favorites' march in the 4th San Miguel Beer (SMB) Philippine Open 9-ball Championship at the Decagon Hall in Silvercity Mall, Julia Vargas Ave. Ortigas Center behind SM Shoemart and Tiendesitas.

Bustamante dumped unheralded Danny Otacan, 9-1, while Alcano drubbed Eduardo Saracho, 9-3, to arrange a second round duel with 2006 Doha Asian Games 9-ball gold medalist Antonio Gabica, who beat 2006 SMB Asian 9-ball tour leg winner Gandy Valle, 9-7.

The 42-year-old Bustamante set up a second round clash with Rene Cruz, who nipped 15-year-old Johann Chua, 9-8, in the inaugural of the P1.3-million tournament organized by Solar Sports and supported by Puyat Sports.

Also in the winning column were reigning National Open champion Lee Vann Corteza, who trounced Roberto Gomez, 9-5, and 2007 BCA Enjoypool.com champion Dennis Orcollo, who beat Elmer Kalaquian, 9-4.

Little known Jundel Mazon, the 2006 Kuwait 9-ball tour winner, provided the tournament's first shocker when he relegated Filipino legendary Jose "Amang" Parica to the loser's brackets following a 9-2 triumph.

Corteza will battle Mazon in the next round. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

Eagles hunt . . .

From page A27

raws, 84-73 Thursday afternoon.

Adamson and winless University of the Philippines try to close out their disappointing seasons earlier on a bright note when they clash in the 2 p.m. contest.

The Falcons' only win in 13 gave came at the expense of the Maroons, who have lost all 13 of their games, sparking rumors of a shakeup in the coaching staff headed by Joe Lipa.

Chris Tiu, Eric Salamat, Ford Arao and leading Rookie of the Year candidate Kirk Long will spearhead the Eagles, the losing finalists last year who will go into the game seeking to extend a five-game winning streak.

National U bowed out of the race last week. *Musong R. Castillo*

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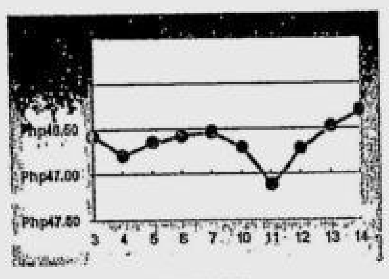
OFW remittances up 4.6% to $1.1B in July

Peso rises to 46.30 to $1

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO YESTERDAY RALlied for the third straight day to end the week at 46.30 to a dol-

PESO/B2



SEPTEMBER

7-month total inflow rose 16% to $8.1B

By Doris C. Dumlao

MONEY SENT HOME BY OVERSEAS FILIPINO workers rose by 4.6 percent in July to $1.1 billion over a year ago as the banking system intensified efforts to capture more of these funds.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. yesterday reported that the July inflows brought the total remittances in the first seven months to $8.1 billion, 16 percent higher year-on-year.

The growth remained above the BSP's 10-percent expected increase for 2007 despite the slowdown in the deployment of new workers abroad.

"Sustained growth in remittances was achieved as banks continued to provide overseas

OFW/B2

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Photos by George Tapan

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Superferry, Cebu Pac cut fares

By Riza T. Olchondra

THIS EARLY, SHIPPING COMPANY SuperFerry and budget airline Cebu Pacific are wooing holiday travelers.

"Book your trips early to enjoy bigger savings," said Andrew Deyto, SuperFerry assistant vice president for sales and marketing.

SuperFerry has just announced its last Todo-Todo Sail Sale for the year that will run until Sept. 22. The sailing period is from Oct. 1 to Dec. 15, 2007.

A ticket from Manila to the Visayas now sells for P599; while a ticket from Manila to Mindanao sells for P799.

"Our open-dated tickets will give our customers the opportunity to take advantage of our sale prices with the flexibility of confirming their travel dates at a later time. On top of that, customers continue to have the benefit of a larger allowance," Deyto said.

Meanwhile, budget carrier Cebu Pacific (CEB) slashed year-round "Go" fares for most of its regional routes.

Starting yesterday, the lowest one-way year-round fares for Manila-Guangzhou, Manila-Xiamen and Manila-Taipei flights were cut by half to P999 from P1,999.

For the Manila-Bangkok and Davao-Hong Kong fares, the lowest fares are now P1,499 from P2,499.

For Manila-Hong Kong, Cebu-Hong Kong and Manila-Macau, fares were marked down from P1,999 to P1,499.

The Manila-Jakarta, Manila-Shanghai and Davao-Singapore fares were slashed by 33 percent to a year-round one-way fare of P1,999 from P2,999.

Cebu Pacific vice president Candice Iyog said: "We are having an unprecedented reduction of our year-round 'Go' fares. We want the public to realize that they no longer have to wait for Christmas or summer to take that vacation."

DTI scraps import fees on garment firms' inputs

Gov't looking for more ways to help local industry

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE and Industry is looking for more ways to support local garments exporters after it reduced the requirements for importation of raw materials, according to Senior Undersecretary Thomas G. Aquino.

In a statement, Aquino said the DTI was following through with efforts to boost the country's national competitiveness.

In a resolution of the Garments and Textile Import Services Special Committee dated July 1, the agency said exporters who import raw materials for garment exports through the bonded warehouse were no longer required to apply for import licenses before each inbound shipment.

The GTIS Division is a frontline service of the Bureau of Export Trade Promotion, which is part of the DTI.

Also, the resolution scrapped fees for the following transactions: P50 for registration of subcontractors; P100, accreditation of subcontractors; P500, bonded manufacturing warehouse and; P1,000, customs bonded manufacturing warehouse.

"The DTI will continue to look for ways that would improve the Philippine business environment, reduce transaction costs, and make our export products more competitive in the world market," Aquino said.

"The elimination or reduction of export-related fees and charges would help in reducing the time and cost of processing export documents, generating savings that can make our exporters more competitive," he added.

DTI data show that garments is the second major manufactured export product of the Philippines after semiconductors, accounting for 5.37 percent of total exports or $2.53 billion in 2006.

Garments exports grew by 13.71 percent in 2006 from the same period in 2005.

Further, Aquino said Malacañang issued last year a series of executive orders and other directives to improve the efficiency of government services through the reduction of red tape.

One is EO No. 589, which exempts qualified exporters participating in international trade fairs, exhibitions, selling missions and trade negotiations from paying travel taxes.

Another is EO 554, which directed all government agencies and corporations to eliminate the fees and charges imposed on export clearances, inspections, permits, certificates and other documentation requirements.

A third is EO 557, which established an antired tape task force composed of full time members from the Presidential Management Staff, Commission on Information and Communications Technology, DTI, Export Development Council Secretariat and National Anti-Poverty Commission.

Erratum

Please be advised that the HP print ad that was published in the September 14, 2007 issue of the Philippine Daily Inquirer reflected the erroneous price of the product featured.

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OFW remittances up 4.6% to $1.1B in July

From page B1

Filipinos and their beneficiaries greater access to financial services, including their savings and investment needs," Tetangco said.

"In particular, banks continued to establish strategic marketing agreements in countries with high density of Filipino workers. The increasing number of remittance centers and tie-ups overseas facilitated the transfer of remittances resulting, in turn, to the better capture of these types of transactions," he said.

The bulk of remittances during the period came from the United States, the United Kingdom, Italy, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Japan and Hong Kong.

The BSP chief also noted that the remittances from overseas Filipinos had remained strong even as the total number of deployed workers declined.

Based on data from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, the total number of workers deployed from January to July fell 3.7 percent to 640,808 from a year ago.

By type of worker, the cumulative number of land-based and sea-based workers totaled 492,790 and 148,018, respectively. These were lower by 2.1 percent and 8.6 percent from their levels in the same period last year.

But for the month of July, total deployment rebounded by 4.5 percent from a year ago, reversing the contraction seen in June 2007.

Land-based workers increased by 3.9 percent during the month while the number of sea-based workers also grew by 6.4 percent during the month.

The Department of Labor and Employment noted an increase in the deployment of skilled workers during the first seven months, notably to Canada, Italy and New Zealand.

Tetangco said this increase in deployment was expected to lift the level of remittances in the near term.

Peso rises to 46.30 to $1

From page B1

lar, reflecting a rebound in Wall Street as well as fresh bargain-hunting in Asian markets ahead of an expected interest rate cut by the US Federal Reserve next week.

The local currency closed at its intra-day high and gained 17 centavos from Thursday's finish of 46.47, likewise riding on an improved risk appetite for regional assets.

"The peso was stronger because everyone was expecting a cut by the US Federal Reserve," said Banco de Oro EPCI chief strategist Jonathan Ravelas.

He said the peso would likely trade between 46.25 and 46.75 next week ahead of the Sept. 18 meeting of the US central bank's open market committee.

How the market will behave afterward, he said, would depend on the extent of the forthcoming rate cut. "We'll see because it might not be enough," Ravelas said.

Expectations that the US Fed would cut its benchmark interest rates next week to offset the liquidity squeeze caused by a slump in the US market emboldened investors to scout for bargains in Asian markets, including currencies, bonds and stocks.

An improved outlook on the US credit markets despite continuing problems in the housing sector also contributed to a general rebound by regional currencies, including the peso.

The local currency thus sustained the gains seen since Wednesday, when the financial markets cheered the nation's peaceful acceptance of a guilty verdict on ousted President Joseph Estrada, who was on trial for large-scale corruption for the last six years.

Since Wednesday when the Sandiganbayan convicted Estrada on plunder charges, the peso has gained by 82 centavos or 1.7 percent.

PLDT divvies up profit

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. has declared fresh cash payouts to stockholders.

The telco yesterday said that its board of directors declared cash dividends during a meeting earlier in the day.

Dividends of P4.675 will be paid per outstanding share of the company's Series V convertible preferred stock, while holders of the Series VI convertible preferred stock will get $0.09 per share. These will be paid on Oct. 15 to holders on record as of Sept. 28.

Dividends for the ten-percent cumulative preferred stock series E,K,O and U is P1 per share. These will be paid on Oct. 31 to stockholders on record as of Oct. 4.

Cash dividends of P1 per share will also be paid to holders of the ten-percent cumulative preferred stock series C,D,J,T and X. These will be paid on Nov. 27 to holders on record as of Oct. 14.

PLDT said the dividends will be funded by the telco's unrestricted retained earnings as of Dec. 31, 2006.

In July, pre-need sales went up

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

SALES OF PRE-NEED firms jumped 36.4 percent to P2.07 billion in July this year largely due to the performances of pension and life plans.

In July 2006, pre-need sales stood at P1.517 billion.

Data from the Securities and Exchange Commission showed that pension plans sales, which made up 64 percent of total pre-need sales, grew 35.6 percent to P1.32 billion in July, from P973.15 million in the same month last year.

Life plans sales meantime showed the sharpest growth at 63.5 percent in July to P352 million from P215.3 million in the same month last year. Life plans accounted for 17 percent of total sales for the month.

Education plans was also up 20.77 percent to P396.78 million in July from P328.54 million last year.

Education plans made up 19 percent of total sales in July.

For the first seven months, pre-need sales grew a mere 7.2 percent to P11.985 billion, form P11.18 billion in 2006.

Education plans slipped 10.57 percent to P2.198 billion in the seven-month period, from P2.458 billion in 2006.

US crisis seen to have minimal effect on RP

With country in pink of fiscal health, think tank expects less risks

By Michelle V. Remo

THE IMPROVEMENT IN THE GOVERNMENT'S fiscal condition and a healthy balance-of-payments (BOP) position have partially shielded the country from the ill effects of a volatile external environment.

Foreign investors have become risk averse—fueled by the scare over the US subprime market—to the disadvantage of many emerging economies having the same credit rating as the Philippines.

But overall, the impact on the domestic economy is seen to be minimal, according to Global Source, a think tank based in New York City.

Government finance officials earlier said interest rates on Philippine bonds have increased since the international market has become jittery.

But Global Source said that the increase in spreads on Philippine bonds since the subprime market woes erupted in July was tempered by macroeconomic developments that investors deemed positive.

Global Source said spreads on bonds had increased by as much as 85 basis points from July to August, but this could have been higher if not for improved fundamentals.

The group cited the government's ability to trim its budget deficit over the last five years. Global Source noted that the budget deficit was equivalent to 5 percent of gross national product in 2002, but dropped to only one percent of GNP last year.

"The risks at this time are on the low side, in our view," Global source said in its recent report on the Philippine economy. "The government is no longer grappling with a runaway budget deficit."

The think tank noted that the government's healthy BOP position has allowed it to borrow more from domestic sources and stay away from the volatile external market at the moment.

In January, way before the US subprime market woes surfaced, the Philippine government had already completed its foreign, commercial borrowing program for the year by selling $1 billion in global bonds to the international market.

The government is therefore not pressured to raise more funds from abroad for its expenditure requirements for the remaining months of the year.

"Healthy balance of payments inflows, especially on the current account side, have allowed the BSP to accumulate reserves of $30 billion as of August 2007 ... [T]ogether with $18 billion in foreign currency deposits, there is enough cash in the system to ease any worry about debt service capacity, in our view," Global Source said.

Earlier, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas gave assurance that the domestic banking sector was protected against the ongoing crisis in the US subprime market.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. recently said that the exposure of Philippine banks to the US subprime market amounts to only $200 million, accounting for 0.2 percent of their combined assets.

To curb corruption, BOC seeks higher budget

By Michelle V. Remo

CUSTOMS COMMISSIONER NAPOLEON Morales wants a higher budget to professionalize the ranks of the Bureau of Customs, perceived to be one of the most corrupt government agencies.

Morales echoed Finance Secretary Margarito Teves' earlier statement, where he called for the rationalization of the organizational setup of revenue collecting agencies, including the BOC, and exemption of their employees from the Salary Standardization law.

"If we treat and reward our men better, they will perform better," Morales said in a statement.

The Customs chief said that, with better compensation, the BOC would be able to encourage its employees to attain their collection targets and become more professional in doing their day-to-day tasks.

Morales noted that the BOC's budget was barely enough to pay salaries and cover expenses of day-to-day operations. He said the BOC needed more funds to train personnel and improve facilities.

The BOC's budget for this year was set at P1.2 billion, equivalent to one-half percent of its P228.2-billion revenue collection target for 2007. Of the total BOC budget, Morales said, P900 million was allocated for salaries of its more than 4,000 employees, while the remaining P300 million was earmarked for operational expenses.

Morales said that, in neighboring countries, the budget allotted for a customs department is equivalent to one percent of its revenue collection target for a year.

He said a higher budget would be necessary to realize his agenda of improving the corporate culture in the BOC and making its employees more professional in the delivery of services to the public.

The national government is relying on the BOC, the second biggest revenue earner, to deliver on its collection targets and help the administration attain its deficit-reduction goals.

Morales earlier said the BOC was working toward fully automating its audit and inspection systems to curb the perennial problem of smuggling. The BOC hopes to avail of official development assistance from foreign creditors to purchase needed equipment.

The BOC has acquired 15 X-ray machines through a foreign loan, to hasten the process of inspecting containers of import goods. Morales said the BOC needs 15 more X-ray machines to be fitted in other ports.

S&P affirms sovereign ratings for RP

STANDARD & POOR'S RATINGS SERvices today affirmed its "BB-/B" foreign currency and "BB+/B" local currency issuer credit ratings on the Philippines.

The outlook is stable.

"Although still among the most vulnerable sovereigns due to its high external leverage, the growing strength of the Philippines' economic fundamentals and the attendant reduction in public sector borrowing requirements provide adequate counterbalance to rising global risk aversion and ebbing liquidity," said Standard & Poor's credit analyst Agost Benard.

The positive trends in domestic fundamentals are reflected in the sovereign's increasing external strength. Balance of payments for the first half of 2007 showed an overall surplus of $3.2 billion, compared to $3.7 billion for the whole of 2006, pushing foreign exchange reserves to an all-time high of $30.3 billion as of end-August.

This is equal to 5.6 months of imports coverage, and 5.9 times the country's short-term external debt based on original maturity. The country's external liquidity position is benefiting from robust remittance and FDI flows and lower foreign currency financing requirements.

This supports a strong peso, which due to the recent market turbulence dipped 4.5 percent to its current 46.8:$1. However, the peso is expected to resume an appreciating path, helping to keep inflation low and moderate the country's still significant debt-service costs. *Reuters*

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SCIENCE/HEALTH

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Making heart surgery affordable to the poor

By Charles E. Buban

WE ALL KNOW THAT IN the Philippines, any type of heart surgery is expensive—from hundreds of thousands to millions of pesos—and is way beyond the capacity for most Filipino patients to afford.

The situation is even more serious in India where its population experiences coronary artery disease at up to four times the rate of the world population, but like us, most Indians also cannot afford to see a doctor, let alone receive life-saving treatment.

However, this nation of 1.13 billion people has Dr. Devi Prasad Shetty, a British-trained cardiologist, who somehow found out how to reduce the cost and increase the access of people to quality heart treatment.

As one of India's leading heart surgeons, Shetty helped establish a network of heart care units at 19 remote government hospitals around India that are video-linked via satellite to his hospital, the Narayana Hrudayalaya Institute of Medical Sciences in Bangalore and allows him to consult patients who'd otherwise never have access to the medical advice of specialists.

Keeping treatment cost low

The network is able to keep treatment costs low but quality of care high by implementing cost-saving methods, such as increasing the volume of patients served and accepting donations.

He is also credited for establishing a revolutionary "micro-health" scheme called Yeshasvini that covers thousands of farmers in Karnataka (a state in Southern India), who for a mere 5 Rupees per month (around P6), can get a free cardiac surgery that would cost $100,000 (P4.7 million) in a US hospital.

"The good news is that Shetty will be arriving in Manila in October to share the secrets to his success in combining medicine and technology in a country with a large concentration of poor people in the world," informed Evelyn Singson, chair of the 6th Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) international CEO conference.

The MAP is a 57-year-old management organization whose more than 700 members represent a cross-section of chief executive officers, chief operations officers and other top management practitioners from the top local and multinational companies operating in the Philippines.

The conference will be held at the Makati Shangri-La from Oct. 2 to 3 (other details available at www.mapceoconference.com).

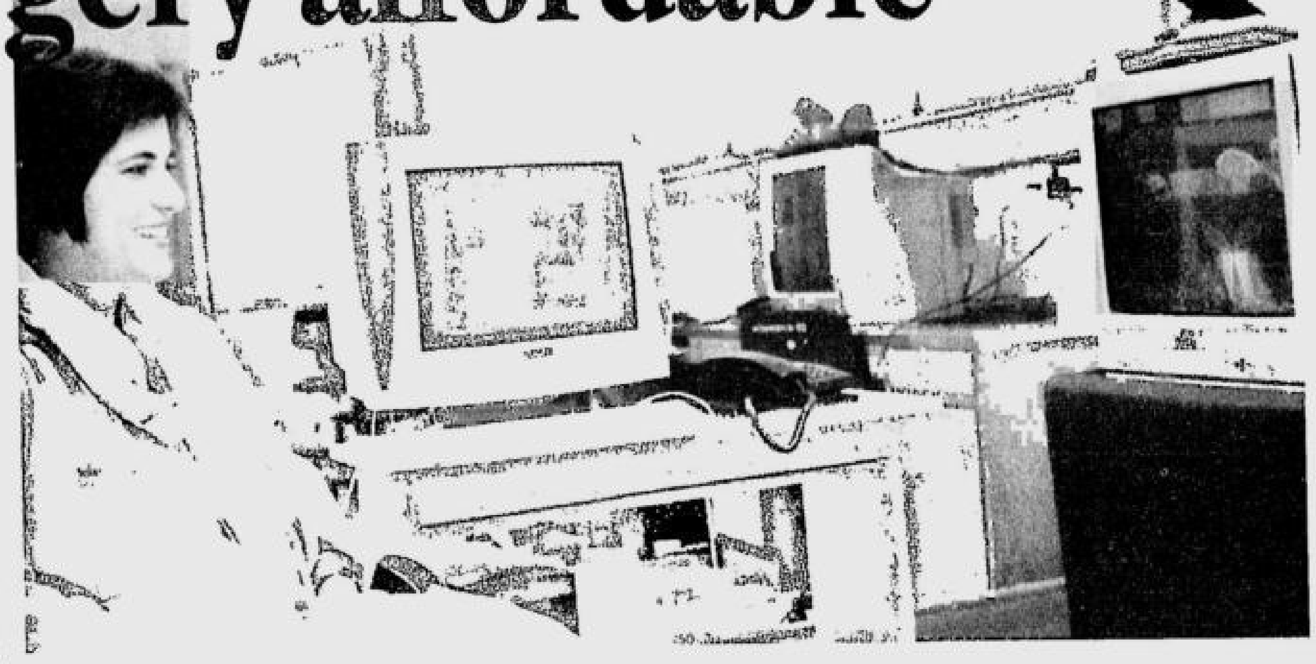
Rare occasion

"This will be a rare occasion for Filipino medical practitioners to learn valuable lessons from Shetty's experience in making healthcare available to the masses," Singson said.

She added that the Philippines will learn a lot from Shetty, who together with his team at the Narayana Hrudayalaya Institute of Medical Sciences, has been saving the lives of thousands of heart patients in India who get mostly free or subsidized treatment regardless of economic status or geographic location.

Founded by Shetty in 2001, the institute and its network of hospitals around India perform 32 heart surgeries a day, making it one of the largest in the world.

Almost half of the patients are children and babies with 60 percent of the treatments being provided below cost or for free.



THE BANGALORE-based Narayana Hrudayalaya Hospital that Shetty founded has a network of coronary care units around India all video-linked via satellite so that patients in far-flung rural areas will have access to specialists' medical advice.

Fun with problem solving

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

PROBLEM SOLVING IS THE heart of math. Math is aimed not so much at speedy calculations, but to develop a rational mind, perseverance and discipline, and reasonable ways to tackle real-life problems.

This morning at Powerbooks in Greenbelt 3, Makati, I will conduct a session on problem solving for educators. Problem solving is not easy, but here are some psychological strategies we can use.

Think out of the box

Look beyond the obvious. Consider unexpected answers. Take this problem, which is included in my newest book "Why Is Math So Hard? And Many Other Tips to Keeping a Sound Body and a Sound Mind" (Straight Talk series, Book 10, Anvil, 2007).

My maker does not want me. My buyer does not use me. My user does not see me. What am I?

Think about this for a bit, and if you are really stumped, ask your child. Children are less fearful of making mistakes, and they have not yet lapsed into routine patterns of thought, so it is easier for them to deal with unusual situations.

Keep an open mind. Do not take things at face value. For instance, say "silk" five times. Then answer this quickly: What do cows drink?

Cows, of course, do not drink milk.

Try this problem: You are at a club where there are only pure liars and pure truth tellers. You meet Rita, who says that the club manager told her that he was a liar. Is Rita a liar or a truth teller? How would you know?

Get your hands dirty

Envision possible scenarios. Get your hands dirty by trying possible answers, by drawing graphs, or simply persevering with a problem, no matter how complex it looks. Life frequently consists of situations where we just have to sit down, take a deep breath, and plug away at a solution.

Now get some paper and solve this problem: An apartment has eight floors. The fifth floor has the only suite with two bedrooms. Mrs. Belen has a baby and cannot carry the stroller upstairs. Mr. and Mrs. Engracio find climbing difficult since they are old. Mr. Ang likes the peaceful living on the top floor. Mrs. Cruz and her daughter need two bedrooms. Mr. & Mrs. Hesus live just below Mr. Ang. Mrs. Carmen lives above Mr. Guzman and below Mrs. Dy. Mr. and Mrs. Feliz live above Mr. & Mrs. Engracio. Who lives where?

Make a figure showing the possible locations, and I am sure that before long, you will be able to solve it.

Look for patterns. Life and our world are full of patterns. After getting your hands dirty, look for patterns that emerge from the problem.

For example, you have a bow and some arrows. If you shoot the first arrow at exactly noon and shoot one arrow every minute after that until 1 p.m., how many arrows will you have shot?

Develop number sense

Ensure that your answer makes sense. I am sad when I see student answers like "13.8 men" or "minus 10 chance of an event happening." Men are not counted as decimals, and the chance of an occurrence cannot be less than zero.

Take this problem, which may need a bit of mental math. Make sure that your answer is reasonable.

Tess bought 2 vases, but because of an emergency, she had to sell them quickly. She sold them for P600 each. On one vase, she made a profit of 20 percent and on the other vase, she lost 20 percent. Did she make or lose money on the whole deal?

These puzzles have appeared in this column in the past, and many readers have successfully solved them. For more puzzles, refer to the books in my Straight Talk series, available in National and Powerbooks. Or e-mail anvilpublishing@yahoo.com to order copies. The books also contain math, science and everyday facts, and strategies for learning. For puzzle enthusiasts, text PUZZLE to 2346 (Globe and Sun) or 206 (Smart) to receive puzzles and solutions every day.

Personal code

DISCOVER

Massie Santos Ballon

IF YOU WANT TO SEE WHAT J. CRAIG Venter is made of—literally—check out the interactive poster detailing his complete genome at the PLoS Biology website (specifically, http://journals.plos.org/plosbiology/suppinfo/pbio.0050254/sd001.php). The process of sequencing this man's genes is laid out in the accompanying PLoS Biology paper by several authors, many of whom work for Venter at the eponymous J. Craig Venter Institute in the United States.

Published ahead of the October release date by the online journal last Sept. 4, the map of Venter's genetic sequence doesn't quite go into full detail; due to size constraints, the individual base pairs aren't shown. Still, if it were enlarged, printed in color and framed, it would be an eye-catching piece and a way to impress guests without saying too much.

Name sounds familiar

If Venter's name sounds familiar, it's because he's the man who challenged the international research consortium working on the Human Genome Project to a race. At the time the HGP had been puzzling out the partial genetic sequences of over 100 unknown people. Their plan was to then combine all the sequences to represent a human being. Despite their daunting head start, the Venter-funded Celera Genomics used a different approach and puzzled out the genetic sequences from five people to develop their own map.

In February 2001, when the journals Science and Nature published drafts of the human genome respectively mapped by the privately owned Celera and the publicly funded Human Genome Project, Celera's founder Venter, declared victory. The final draft was completed two years later and made available to researchers everywhere online.

Study genetic bases

The information has given scientists a better way to study the genetic bases of several diseases, but its very generality also has limitations. The piecemeal genetic sequences that make these representative human genomes can't show the genetic diversity between various peoples.

Many Asians, for example, turn red when drinking alcohol, but Caucasians do not. Also consider that the ability to drink cow's milk and tolerate lactose, it turns out, isn't due to just one gene, but a variety, based on whether one's ancestors come from Europe, Africa or Asia. In short, two representative genomes aren't very helpful when it comes to specifics.

As lead author Samuel Levy and his team note in their paper, sequencing Venter's genome has lent credence to the notion that human beings are only 99.5 percent identical to each other. The representative human genomes completed four years ago suggested the figure was closer to 99.9 percent. One way to settle this would be to compare the genomes of different people.

Personal genomes

Conveniently, right now, two full personal genomes are known to exist. James Watson, half of the team that discovered the DNA helix, received two DVDs with his personal genomic sequence last May. He's promised to make it publicly available too. If more personal genomes become available for scientific comparison, the data can only help further refine the genetic variance number.

Since the publication of the representative human genomes, projects like the International HapMap Project have focused on identifying regional genetic differences and similarities. The publication of Venter's genome, however, proposes a different direction. Why stick with generalities, the paper seems to ask, when you can be as specific as you want?

The cost of having one's very own genome completely sequenced, unfortunately, is still prohibitively high. When it becomes affordable, one reason to get it would be to find out just what genes you inherited from both parents. Unfortunately, it can't tell you who gave you which version of each gene, unless both of your parents have their own genomes sequenced as well. At that point, comments like "He gets that from you!" can finally be verified and such arguments settled once and for all.

* * *

E-mail the author at massie@massie.com.

RP could prevent more child deaths, if…

By Tessa R. Salazar

WE ADULTS SHOULD BE GETTING OUR acts together if we intend to keep our children alive.

This is the urgent message of a Filipino pediatrician and member of the World Health Organization.

For every 1,000 live births in the Philippines, 34 children will not make it to their fifth birthday—a far cry from that of Hong Kong and Singapore where only three to four will die before the age of 5.

Furthermore, those in Hong Kong and Singapore die mostly from metabolic or genetic disorders, while most Filipino children die from infectious diseases—preventable by proper nutrition, immunization and good health-seeking behaviors by parents and guardians.

Teamwork needed

Dr. Lulu C. Bravo, a member of the technical steering committee of the World Health Organization's child and adolescent health department, said child survival in the country could improve with teamwork as well as implementation of the World Health Organization-Unicef's combined strategies.

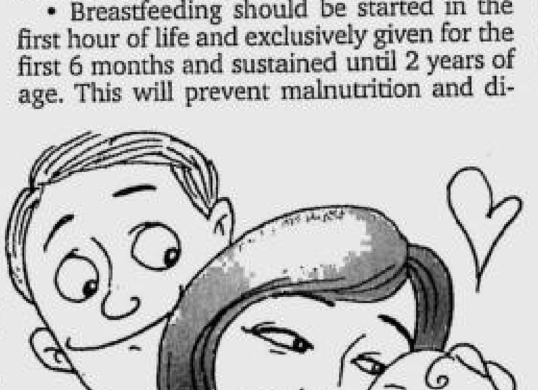
Bravo, vice chancellor for research and executive director of the UP National Institutes of Health in Manila, said the teamwork meant the combined forces of the country's pediatricians, obstetricians, international and local nongovernment organizations and the Department of Health.

"We are putting together all the NGOs that will probably be able to come up with a bigger impact on child survival. These are all interconnected. The public-private mix is now an ongoing principle in providing the health delivery that we need, because definitely the government cannot do it all. There are limited government resources," said Bravo during a Sept. 11 Philippine College of Physicians-Zuellig Foundation health forum.

Recommendations

Bravo, a professor of pediatrics at UP Manila, is promoting the WHO and the United Nation Children's Emergency Fund's combined recommendations of child survival strategies, aptly called "interventions needed to achieve the fourth millennium development goals." These are:

- One third of deaths in children below 5 die during the first few hours and days of life. Skilled birth attendants should be given the opportunity to provide prenatal and perinatal care to mothers. Give these well-trained attendants the necessary management or referral during complicated deliveries.
- Adequate newborn care should include clean and aseptic cord care, good prophylaxis, immunization at birth, and provision of warm and proper temperatures.
- Breastfeeding should be started in the first hour of life and exclusively given for the first 6 months and sustained until 2 years of age. This will prevent malnutrition and digestive diseases as well as infectious and allergic conditions.
- Micronutrient supplementation is the giving of essential vitamins and minerals, specifically iron, vitamin A and zinc, which have been found to increase child survival by reducing severity of diseases.
- The seven vaccines against tuberculosis, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles, polio and hepatitis B are essential, but new vaccines can be included to increase coverage for protection against meningitis and pneumonia and diarrhea.
- Proper management of pneumonia, diarrhea and malaria and other infectious diseases should be taught not only to professionals but to midwives, volunteer health workers and even mothers to increase early recognition and treatment of these diseases, thereby preventing deaths from these killer diseases.
- Prevention of accidents and childhood injuries has to be disseminated because more children are also dying from drowning, poisoning and vehicular accidents, which are again highly preventable. Public information is much needed here.



Other interventions

Bravo added that other interventions such as deworming, provision of clean water supply, provision of insecticide-treated mosquito nets in malaria hotspots and proper birth spacing are also worth giving a try. Areas that have already succeeded in implementing the essential recommendations could now begin to consider expanding and providing wider health coverage through other intervention measures.

"What is definitely needed is the political will and the mobilization of everyone to save our children from dying from so many preventable causes," she said.

Alliance Global allots ₱17B for '08 expansion

Bulk to go to Megaworld expansion

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

ALLIANCE GLOBAL GROUP INC., the holding firm of taipan Andrew Tan, is setting aside P17 billion in 2008 to grow its fast food, property and brandy businesses.

AGGI president Kingson Sian said that of the total, roughly P12 billion would be spent for Megaworld Corp. where Alliance Global owns 46 percent.

Another P1 billion will be spent for Golden Arches Development Corp. (GADC), the master franchise holder of McDonald's in the country, as it puts up 50 stores on the average every year over the next five years. These may be a combination of company-owned and franchised stores.

Alliance Global owns 49 percent of Golden Arches.

The balance of P4 billion will be for Emperador Distillers Inc. partly for its plan to introduce flavored alcoholic beverages.

"Overall, we are very much on track with the continued expansion of the local economy," Sian said.

Alliance Global is spending the same capital expenditure of P17 billion this year.

The company also disclosed yesterday that it was targeting consolidated revenues of P25 billion this year, or 184 percent higher than the P8.8 billion in 2006, largely to be driven by the property and brandy businesses recently absorbed by Alliance Global.

Alliance Global increased its consolidated revenues in the first half by 254 percent to P12.4 billion from a year ago. Net income surged to P1.23 billion in the same period, up 445 percent from last year.

Company chair Andrew Tan said that as of June 30, the company had a cash horde of P32.9 billion, which would be invested in all its core businesses to ensure sustained growth.

iRemit IPO gets SEC approval

THE SECURITIES AND Exchange Commission (SEC) has approved the plan by I-Remit Inc. (iRemit), the country's biggest Filipino-owned nonbank remittance company, to raise up to P811.3 million from a maiden debut at the stock market.

iRemit is offering 140.6 million shares, consisting of 107.42 million new shares and up to 33.19 million secondary shares or those held by existing shareholders, documents with the SEC showed.

Selling shareholders are JTKC Equities Inc., Surewell Equities Inc. and JPSA Global Services Co.

The offer price is between P4 and P5.77 a share.

The offer shares will represent 25 percent of the total issued and outstanding capital stock of the company.

The net proceeds from the primary offer, which are estimated to hit between P393.6 million and P575.3 million, will be used to partly finance the company's expansion abroad, cover working capital requirements and partially retire some short-term debts.

The company is looking at Australia, Hong Kong, Austria, the United States, Macau, New Zealand and Italy starting this year until 2012. The company is targeting to spend between P233.3 million and P317.3 million for its expansion.

iRemit plans to list its shares on the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) on Oct. 15, with the offer period tentatively scheduled from Oct. 1 to 8.

"We are all set and looking forward to our upcoming listing this October," said iRemit chair Bansan Choa in a separate statement. "We are hopeful that we can get the approval from the PSE soon as well."

Established in 2001, iRemit has rapidly grown to become the biggest Filipino-owned, independent remittance company in the country. It operates in 23 countries across North America, Europe, Australia, Asia, the Pacific Isles, and the Middle East, with 378 outlets, associates and agents worldwide, and more than 2,000 payout stations throughout the Philippines.

In a span of six years, iRemit had a compounded average annual growth rate of 53 percent in terms of revenue. It is also projecting to achieve record growth this year.

For the first half of 2007, the company posted a consolidated net income of P43.5 million, exceeding its full-year consolidated net income of P42.5 million in 2006. As of June 2007, the company had total assets of P1.16 billion.

iRemit is also a collection partner of the Social Security System, Pag-IBIG and PhilHealth to accept payments from overseas Filipino workers. It is also the biggest nonbank issuer of Visa Debit Card in the Philippines.

First Metro Investment Corp. has been named financial adviser and underwriter for the initial public offering. *Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson*

LAND ROVER'S newest premium 4x4 makes its Manila debut in the all-new Freelander 2. It was presented to the press at the Land Rover showroom in Makati by (L-R) Jason Soong, executive director; Wellington Soong, chair and president; and Marc Louis Soong, executive director of LRPhils Motors Inc., the official distributor of Land Rover vehicles in the Philippines.

ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Stocks close higher in cautious trading

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.16 PERcent higher yesterday as investors took little comfort from solid gains on Wall Street overnight while trading cautiously after crude oil prices hit fresh record highs, dealers said.

They said investors also refrained from buying aggressively ahead of the US Federal Reserve's policy meeting next week, chasing only a few stocks with attractive valuations and sound fundamentals.

The composite index added 5.33 points to 3,294.55 off the day's high of 3,309.34. Turnover was 3.4 billion shares valued at P4.3 billion.

There were 52 gainers and 36 losers, while 63 stocks were flat.

The all-share index rose 3.26 points to 2,086.74.

"Uncertainty over oil prices and US interest rates are keeping investors very cautious," said James Lago of Westlink Global Equities.

US stocks rose strongly Thursday amid signs that the credit crunch may be easing following news that the nation's biggest mortgage lender, Countrywide Financial Corp., had secured $12 billion in additional financing.

But oil prices have hit record highs and will likely remain under pressure in the near-term due to expected hurricanes in the United States and with the approaching winter season, investors have reason not to commit to the market.

Oil prices eased to below $80 a barrel in Asian trading hours, from its record close of $80.09 in US trades Thursday.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. rose P15 to P2,690.

Shares in Ayala Corp advanced P5 to P487.50, still supported by the conglomerate's share buyback program announced Tuesday.

Recent winners fell as investors locked in gains, with shares in Metrobank—the nation's biggest lender by assets—down P2.50 at P51.50. *AFP*

CURRENCIES

September 14, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.720409	1.000000	46.5060
Japan	Yen	0.006259	0.008688	0.4040
United Kingdom	Pound	1.460197	2.026900	94.2630
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.092499	0.128398	5.9713
Switzerland	Franc	0.606916	0.842460	39.1794
Canada	Dollar	0.697193	0.967773	45.0073
Singapore	Dollar	0.476903	0.661989	30.7865
Australia	Dollar	0.604116	0.838574	38.9987
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.912016	2.654069	123.4301
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.192104	0.266660	12.4013
Brunei	Dollar	0.475330	0.659805	30.6849
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000076	0.000106	0.0049
Thailand	Baht	0.022513	0.031250	1.4533
UAE	Dirham	0.196190	0.272331	12.6650
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.388100	64.5550
Korea	Won	0.000774	0.001074	0.0499
China	Yuan**	0.095920	0.133147	6.1921
Denmark	Kroner	0.134297	0.186418	8.6696
India	Rupee	0.017899	0.024845	1.1554
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.207312	0.287770	13.3830
New Zealand	Dollar	0.516385	0.716794	33.3352
Sweden	Kroner	0.108077	0.150022	6.9769
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.021776	0.030227	1.4057

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—Sept. 13, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen.
** Asian time closing rate as of Sept. 13, 2007

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of September 14, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
73	37.5	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	56	56.5	55	56	188,000
73.5	53	Bank of the Philippine Islands	63.5	64	63.5	63.5	1,215,600
935	630	China Banking Corp.	800	800	800	800	710
23.5	18.5	Citystate Savings Bank	23	23	23	23	600
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank, Inc	0.41	0.41	0.4	0.4	150,000
75.5	39	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	53	53	50.5	51.5	9,579,300
65.5	33	Philippine National Bank	47	48.5	47	48	242,600
68	41	Philippine Savings Bank	63	63	63	63	500
39.57	14.57	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	23.5	23.5	23.25	23.25	667,900
90	49.5	Security Bank Corp.	70	70	69	69	1,067,800
66	42.53	Union Bank of the Philippines	56	56	56	56	400
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
5.6	1.76	ATR KimEng Financial Corp.	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	4,000
2.22	0.6	Bankard Inc.	2	2	1.96	1.98	3,137,000
16.25	2.75	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	10.75	11	10.5	10.5	369,900
42	29	First Metro Investment Corp.	42	42	42	42	5,000
5	2.95	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	3.25	3.45	3.25	3.45	7,651,000
3.1	1	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	1.96	1.96	1.92	1.92	34,000
1,005.00	225	The Philippine Stock Exchange, Inc	780	780	780	780	10
2,305.00	1,945.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,300.00	2,305.00	2,300.00	2,305.00	1,410
1.94	1.3	iVantage Corp	1.44	1.44	1.42	1.42	178,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	3.8	Aboitiz Power Corp.	5.1	5.1	5	5.1	593,000
0.57	0.23	East Asia Power Resources Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	200,000
70	47.5	First Gen Corp.	66	66.5	65.5	65.5	580,000
92	46	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	75	75	74	74	1,583,400
15	8.8	Manila Water Co. Inc.	13.75	14	13.75	13.75	2,233,900
105.45	16.59	Manila Electric Co.	76.5	79	76.5	79	650,800
7	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6.1	6.1	5.9	6	26,191,000
6.5	3.8	Petron Corp.	5.1	5.1	5	5.1	9,604,000
14.75	6.6	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	6.9	7.1	6.8	6.8	161,000
1.9	0.95	Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp.	1.22	1.24	1.22	1.22	1,270,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	2.95	Alaska Milk Corp.	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	10,000
2.95	1.66	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	1.76	1.78	1.76	1.76	1,162,000
2.6	1.08	CADP Group Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	19,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	24	24.5	24	24.5	108,000
61	33	Jollibee Foods Corp.	52.5	52.5	52	52.5	20,300
9	4.7	Pancake House Inc.	8.6	8.6	8.6	8.6	3,000
1.96	0.84	RFM Corp.	1.68	1.68	1.66	1.66	255,000
3.85	2.06	Roxas Holdings	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.2	3,000
80	59	San Miguel Corp. "A"	62	62	61	61	39,000
88	60	San Miguel Corp. "B"	63.5	63.5	61	61	1,217,500
22	15.25	Universal Robina Corp.	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	3,591,200
0.55	0.22	Vitarich Corp	0.37	0.39	0.37	0.39	150,000
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.1	1.59	EEI Corp.	4.2	4.25	4.2	4.25	45,000
21.5	6	Federal Chemicals Inc.	8	8	8	8	2,000
9.2	4.85	Holcim Philippines Inc.	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	3,005,000
2	0.28	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc	1.14	1.14	1.1	1.12	1,812,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	3.35	Chemrez Technologies Inc	4.4	4.6	4.4	4.55	1,006,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.75	0.105	Picop Resources Inc	0.35	0.35	0.33	0.33	6,320,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
3.9	1.94	A. Soriano Corp.	3.25	3.25	3.2	3.2	330,000
0.17	0.025	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.0975	0.0975	8,600,000
1.28	0.21	APC Group Inc.	0.62	0.63	0.61	0.63	7,580,000
3.6	1.4	ATN Holdings Inc. "A"	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.85	225,000
0.018	0.007	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "A"	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	30,000,000
0.019	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "B"	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	5,000,000
9.7	4.9	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	4,877,000
0.021	0.0075	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	189,000,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	5.2	5.3	5.1	5.3	10,999,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.2	2.24	2.2	2.22	859,000
590	375	Ayala Corp.	490	490	485	487.5	836,780
5.8	1.2	Benpres Holdings Corp.	3.55	3.7	3.55	3.7	13,368,000
10.25	3.65	DMCI Holdings Inc.	8.2	8.2	8.1	8.2	309,000
6.9	1.06	Eton Properties Philippines Inc.	3.6	3.65	3.6	3.65	24,000
8	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	5.5	5.6	5.5	5.6	20,000
3.55	1.16	House of Investments Inc.	1.84	1.86	1.84	1.86	231,000
14.5	5.7	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	9.6	9.6	9.6	9.6	5,955,000
11.5	0.98	Multitech Investments Corp.	4.7	4.75	4.55	4.65	2,239,000
8.2	2.8	PAL Holdings Inc.	7	7.1	6.9	6.9	177,000
0.215	0.01	Pacifica Inc. "A"	0.205	0.205	0.175	0.185	905,000,000
0.75	0.175	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.38	0.38	1,200,000
452.5	217.7	SM Investments Corp.	345	350	345	347.5	420,220
0.73	0.125	Sinophil Corp.	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.33	6,620,000
1.6	0.9	South China Resources Inc.	1.42	1.48	1.4	1.42	304,000
23	1	TKC Steel Corp.	18	18	18	18	75,000
0.75	0.1	Wellex Industries Inc	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	1,130,000
		PROPERTY					
2.34	0.81	A Brown Co. Inc	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	110,000
8.9	5	Anchor Land Holdings, Inc	7.6	8	7.6	7.8	205,000
19.25	11.25	Ayala Land Inc.	14	14.25	14	14	7,251,800
1.88	0.99	Belle Corp.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	320,000
0.86	0.3	Crown Equities Inc.	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.63	420,000
0.99	0.5	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.68	0.68	0.67	0.67	4,950,000
0.47	0.048	Ever Gotesco Resources and Hold'gs Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	3,850,000
1.48	0.45	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.12	1.12	11,094,000
2.44	1.1	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.4	1.42	87,928,000
1.12	0.24	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.67	0.68	0.64	0.65	4,240,000
4.4	1.69	Megaworld Corp.	3.25	3.25	3.15	3.2	14,004,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	3.95	3.95	3.95	3.95	1,000
0.87	0.32	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.45	0.46	0.45	0.46	230,000
9.2	1.1	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	3.45	3.9	3.45	3.9	55,000
23	12.5	Robinson Land Corp.	18	18	17.25	17.25	685,500
5.9	1.5	SM Development Corp.	3.8	3.8	3.75	3.8	174,000
13.5	6.4	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	11	11	10.75	10.75	6,713,000
1.34	0.46	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.57	0.58	0.57	0.58	350,000
0.49	0.08	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.25	0.26	0.24	0.24	2,910,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc.	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.2	60,931,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	16	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	31	31	31	31	23,600
11.75	8.7	GMA Network Inc	9.4	9.5	9.4	9.5	208,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.22	1.22	1.2	1.2	580,000
1,445.00	1,030.00	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,325.00	1,325.00	1,320.00	1,320.00	66,380
2,820.00	2,040.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,680.00	2,695.00	2,680.00	2,690.00	256,310
7.9	4.2	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.9	245,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	2,350,000
11.5	2	IPVG Corp.	8.6	8.6	8.6	8.6	6,304,000
0.065	0.027	ISM Communications Corp.	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	10,400,000
29.5	8	Imperial Resources Inc. "A"	15	15	15	15	1,000
0.32	0.043	Island Information and Technology Inc.	0.195	0.2	0.19	0.195	23,920,000
2.08	1.1	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.24	1.24	450,000
0.0725	0.027	PhilWeb.Com Inc.	0.049	0.049	0.048	0.049	37,000,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc	2.85	2.95	2.75	2.75	4,330,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
2.14	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.54	1.54	1.54	1.54	79,000
6.8	3.2	Asian Terminals Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	295,000
34.5	15.75	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	32.5	32.5	31	32.5	431,200
2.16	0.93	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.	1.84	1.9	1.84	1.9	134,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.8	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	280,000
1.2	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	1,670,000
		EDUCATION					
3.7	2.6	iPeople Inc	3	3	3	3	278,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
41	6.6	JTH Davies Holdings Inc.	26.5	26.5	25.5	25.5	1,300
6	1.92	Macroasia Corp.	4.35	4.35	4.2	4.3	1,277,000
17.25	9.8	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	11.75	11.75	11.75	11.75	21,000
30	10	Paxys Inc	14	14	13.75	14	2,157,800
		MINING					
0.017	0.0085	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.011	235,500,000
7.6	3.6	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	5	5.2	5	5.2	75,000
7.7	3.85	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	5.1	5.3	5.1	5.3	51,000
21.25	7.7	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	14.25	14.25	14	14.25	1,077,600
14.25	8.7	Benguet Corp. "A"	11	11	10.5	10.5	1,700
5	1.8	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	1,000
3.1	0.33	GEOGRACE Resources Philippines Inc.	1.74	1.8	1.72	1.8	109,792,000
0.35	0.18	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "A"	0.3	0.31	0.28	0.3	70,600,000
0.42	0.22	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "B"	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.33	24,920,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. "A"	0.027	0.029	0.027	0.028	411,700,000
0.041	0.019	Manila Mining Corp. "B"	0.03	0.032	0.03	0.031	84,900,000
30	1.2	NiHAO Minerals Resources Int'l Inc.	11.5	11.75	11.25	11.25	909,600
0.021	0.0079	Omico Corp.	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.012	27,200,000
6.8	3.25	Philex Mining Corp.	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.4	11,307,000
43	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	32	32	32	32	1,700
1.36	0.39	United Paragon Mining Corp.	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97	100,000
1.8	0.56	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	717,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Energy Corp.	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.32	3,350,000
0.025	0.0095	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "A"	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.023	91,100,000
0.027	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "B"	0.025	0.025	0.024	0.024	144,400,000
29	8.6	PNOC Exploration Corp. "B"	25	25	25	25	700
11.75	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	10.25	10.25	10	10	48,000
0.028	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.024	0.025	0.023	0.025	585,900,000

AVERAGES

Financial	868.60 DOWN	4.99	24,575,730	726,824,610.00
Industrial	4,436.10 DOWN	2.96	61,835,100	623,532,765.00
Holding Firms	1,837.97 UP	15.32	1,195,304,000	948,146,115.00
Property	1,439.35 DOWN	0.32	206,422,300	695,871,565.00
Service	1,605.35 UP	7.48	92,758,590	909,618,295.00
Mining & Oil	6,426.36 UP	165.69	1,803,652,300	360,419,735.00
All Shares Index	2,086.74 UP	3.26		
PSEI	3,294.55 UP	5.33		
		GRAND TOTALS	3,384,548,020	4,264,413,085.00

COMPILED BY SCHATZI QUODALA, INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK, PS

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

Philippine Sugar Center Bldg.
North Ave., Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No. (02) 453-3900/981-3800 to 30
Website www.nfa.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

In consonance with R.A. 8976 otherwise known as the Philippine Food Fortification Act of 2000, the National Food Authority (NFA) as the implementing agency on iron fortified rice, wishes to announce that it will be conducting a bidding on October 09, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. at the NFA Boardroom, 6th Floor, Philippine Sugar Center Bldg., North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City among all interested suppliers for the supply of THREE HUNDRED METRIC TONS (300 MT), MAXIMUM IRON COATED RICE GRAIN PREMIX with an approved budget of Php 69.6 M, packed in twenty five (25) kg multi-wall paper bag or its equivalent. Detailed product specifications shall be included in the Terms of Reference (TOR). Delivery period at designated NFA Manila warehouse/s shall be one hundred twenty (120) days upon the receipt of the Notice to Proceed.

All interested suppliers are required to submit price offers in Philippine Currency, (inclusive of all taxes) as specified in the NFA Bid Form.

All bidders are required to post a bid bond equivalent to 3% of the approved budget of Php 69.6 M in the form of Cash, Cashier's and/or Manager's Check or an irrevocable L/C issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila.

List of Eligibility Requirements, Instruction to Bidders and Terms of Reference (TOR) may be secured thru MR. CARLITO G. CO, Assistant Department Manager and MR. NESTOR U. PUANGCO, Division Manager, Department for Marketing Operations, 4th Flr., Left Wing, Philippine Sugar Center Bldg., North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City, Telephone Nos. 920-0651, 454-1890 or 426-0569 starting September 17 up to September 24, 2007, except Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. upon payment of a Php15,000.00 non-refundable fee.

The **Pre-Bidding** conference will be held on **September 25, 2007**, at **10:00 a.m.** at the NFA Boardroom, 6th Floor, Philippine Sugar Center Bldg., North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.

Submission of eligibility requirements, technical proposal and price offers will be between 8:00 a.m. to 9:55 a.m. at the NFA Boardroom, 6th Floor, Philippine Sugar Center Bldg., North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City on **October 09, 2007. Opening of bids** will start at exactly **10:00 a.m.**

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals, to waive any required or defect therein and accept the bid/s which is deemed most advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **LUDOVICO J. JARINA**
Deputy Administrator and
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Sept. 15, 2007)

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

sbma
Bldg. 255, Barryman St.,Subic Bay
Freeport Zone Philippines 2222
Tel. Nos.:(6347)252-4214/4230/4282 Fax:(6347)252-4284/4251

SBMA-BAC-INV-10-07
Tent Rental
SBMA, SBFZ

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **SUBIC BAY METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY** (SBMA), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder items/services:

Items to Bid	Approved Budget Cost (ABC)
Tent Rental: Supply of materials, labor, tools, equipment and all other incidentals necessary for the installations, maintenance and removal of tent structure on rental basis including the following: a) Minimum of 39 sets of Halogen Floodlights or approved equivalent b) Minimum of 36 units 7.5 HP window type air-conditioning units or approved equivalent on scaffold framing at exterior c) Combination of ordinary plywood and other regular floor boards on 2" x 2" and/or 2" x 3" wood anchors as floor system for the entire area d) Sufficient generator(s), diesel supply, operators/technicians, cables, breakers and others as may be needed to operate as temporary power supply for the lighting fixtures and air-conditioning units that will be provided for on the four day event proper including one (1) day testing of air-conditioning units before the event.	P 5,000,000.00

Prospective bidders must be manufacturers or authorized distributors of the above-mentioned supplies and equipments for bidding, must have proof of completion of the delivery of the same and related project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least fifty percent (50%) of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use a non-discretionary *"pass/fail"* criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	*Schedule*	*Venue*
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	September 11 to 19, 2007 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.	BAC Secretariat Procurement and Property Management Dept. (PPMD) Rm. 201, Bldg. 255, Barryman Road, SBFZ.
2. Pre-Bid Conference	September 19, 2007 2:00 p.m. Tuesday	PPMD Conference Room Procurement and Property Management Dept. (PPMD) Rm. 201, Bldg. 255, Barryman Road, SBFZ.
3. Submission/ Opening of Bids	October 2, 2007, 2:00 p.m. Monday	Procurement and Property Management Dept. (PPMD) Rm. 201, Bldg. 255, Barryman Road, SBFZ.

Bid Documents will be available to prospective bidders only upon payment of a non-refundable amount of *P3,000.00* to the SBMA Treasury Dept., Bldg. 299, Barryman Road, SBFZ.

The SBMA assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

ATTY. JOCELYN G. ALVARADO
BAC Chairman

(PDI – September 8 & 15, 2007)

Zamboanga City Electric Cooperative, Inc.

(ZAMCELCO)
Zamboanga City

INVITATION TO BID

The Zamboanga City Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ZAMCELCO) at Putik, this city per requisite under Board Policies on Pre-Qualifications, and Bids and Awards, invites ALL interested Bidders/Suppliers to bid for the supply of the following electrical materials/equipment/items, to wit:

No	Quantity	Unit	Item Description
1	5	UNITS	DISTRIBUTION TRANSFORMER 25kVA, AGENCY PRICE: P88,850.00
2	5	UNITS	DISTRIBUTION TRANSFORMER 50KVA, AGENCY PRICE: P115,500.00
3	2	UNITS	DISTRIBUTION TRANSFORMER 75KVA, AGENCY PRICE: P156,450.00 BRAND: PHILEC (BRAND NEW) DOUBLE BUSHING 13.2/7.62KV, 240V/480V
4	1	UNIT	DISTRIBUTION TRANSFORMER, 25KVA, AGENCY PRICE: P73,500.00 BRAND: PHILEC (BRAND NEW) DOULBE BUSHING 7.62KV/120-240

You may secure the Pre-qualification Requirements from the office of the Finance Department, ZAMCELCO Complex in Putik, this city anytime during office hours and submit the same upon completion of all requirements thereof.

Submission of the Pre-qualification Requirements shall not be later than 5:00 p.m. of **September 18, 2007** and no documents appertaining thereto, shall be accepted thereafter, UPON PAYMENT OF A NON-REFUNDABLE FEE OF FIVE THOUSAND PESOS ONLY (P5,000.00).

All applicants will be duly notified as to the results of the pre-qualification eligibility process. Only those who are pre-qualified will be allowed to participate in the bidding. A post-qualification may be conducted accordingly hereafter.

Bidding will be conducted on **September 25, 2007.**

Sealed bid in duplicate copies should be submitted to the Committee on Bids and Awards at the Office of the Finance Department at the above-mentioned address on or before 2:00 p.m. of **September 25, 2007**. Five percent (5%), Bidder's Bond is required as a matter of policy.

The right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality therein, or to accept such bid as may be considered advantageous to the coop is hereby reserved as an absolute prerogative of ZAMCELCO.

(Sgd.) REINERIO R. RAMOS
General Manager

(PDI - Sept. 15 & 16, 2007)

Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC)

Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) is a financial institution of Japanese Government which has a principal mandate to execute Japan's external economic policy and economic cooperation through lending and other financial operations for economic and social development of developing countries, for the promotion of Japanese exports, imports and economic activities overseas, etc.

JBIC Representative Office in Manila is seeking a:

PROJECT OFFICER

who will be assigned to assist JBIC Chief Representative to monitor, review and coordinate, among others, with various government agencies and other stakeholders with respect to implementation of Japanese Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) Loans funded projects in the Philippines.

Required qualifications are:

(i) Age between 28-35 years old
(ii) Bachelor or Masters degree in Economics, Business, Engineering or other related fields
(iii) Five to ten years of professional experience in a responsible position related to Foreign Development Aid, Management Consulting, Project Finance and Project/Financial Management in government or private sector
(iv) Must be highly proficient in written and oral communication in English; and
(v) Excellent computer skills (Word, Excel, Powerpoint)

Interested persons meeting the above requirements should submit a letter of interest together with curriculum vitae, bio-data, education, professional experience, names of three references, and current salary, on or before Sunday, October 7, 2007 to **JBIC-Manila@jbic.go.jp** (attention to Chief Representative, JBIC Representative Office in Manila). Only applications sent by e-mail will be accepted.

Chief Representative
Japan Bank for International Cooperation
Representative Office in Manila
http://www.jbicmanila.ph

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

Region IX, Zamboanga Peninsula
Regional Office, Zamboanga City
Tel. No. (062) 991-1828/985-1183
Fax No. (062) 991-1339

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Food Authority, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites all interested Trucking/Hauling Operators who are reigstered with NFA, Region IX, to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Trucking/Hauling of the 2007 NFA imported/local rice and/or palay stocks for the hereunder projects:

SOURCE/ DESTINATION	Estimated Volume (bags)	Approved Rate/bag	Approved Budget (Php)
NFA Whse, Zambo. City to NFA, Pagadian	47,800.00	Php40.00	1,912,000.00
NFA Whse, Zambo. City to NFA, Dipolog	95,100.00	Php 40.00	3,804,000.00
Total	142,900.00		5,716,000.00

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding, and have key personnel and cargo trucks/equipment (owned, leased or under purchase) available for the prosecution of the project. The list of minimum cargo trucks/ equipment requirements is indicated in the Eligibility Forms. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Last day for Registration/Renewal of bidders who are not yet NFA Accredited and/or with expired registration	September 19, 2007
2. Submission of LOI and Issuance of Eligibility/Bid Documents	Sept. 15-27, 2007
3. Pre-bid Conference	September 28, 2007
4. Submission and Opening of Bids	October 10, 2007 at 2:00 p.m.

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon submission of LOI and upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Php 8,000.00 to the NFA Cashier, Zamboanga City.

Venue of the submission/opening of bids will be at the Office of the ARD, Regional Office, Gov. Ramos Ave., Zamboanga City.

The NFA assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The NFA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any formality, technicality or defect found therein and accept such bids deemed most advantageous to the NFA or to the Government.

Approved by:
(Sgd.) ROLANDO M. MARAVILLA
BAC Chairman

(PDI--Sept. 15, 2007)

DBP

Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines will receive sealed bids on September 27, 2007, at 2:00 p.m., 12/F, Suite 5, Executive Lounge of the DBP Head Office, Sen.Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City for the following properties on **CASH BASIS**:

CODE NO.	DESCRIPTION	AREA (sq.m.)	LOCATION		Minimum Bid
REAL ESTATE METRO MANILA					
AM-RP- 46	Residential lot (TCT No.T-100570) with bldg. & imp.	253	No. 23 Sangumay St. corner Mariposa St., Manuela Subd., Phase III-A Pamplona, Las Pinas City	P	1,560,300.00
BATANGAS PSM-01	Two (2) adjoining parcels of lots (TCT Nos. T-108495 & T-108496)	3,165	Ayala Highway, Barangay Balintawak, North Lipa City	P	29,118,000.00
IRIGA AM-ML- 47	Three (3) adjoining parcels of commercial lots (TCT Nos. 2004, 2005 & 2006) with hotel & commercial bldgs., facilities, machinery & equipment	5,154	San Francisco, Iriga City	P	23,000,000.00
NUEVA ECIJA AM-RP- 48	Residential lot (TCT No.T-118073) with bldg. & imp.	100	Lot 15-Blk.1, Vista Amor Subd., Brgy. Bangad, Cabanatuan City	P	301,000.00

BIDDERS ARE REMINDED:

1. To inspect the properties to determine their actual condition before the bidding.
2. To submit in DBP's official bid form available at AMD-Acquired Assets, Ground Floor (for Code starting with AM) and at WSD-PSM Basement (for Code starting with PSM), DBP Head Office during office hours.
3. To be on time. No bids will be accepted once unsealing of the bids commences. The sale shall be subject to other terms and conditions which may be imposed by the Bank.

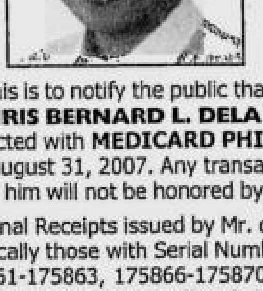
DBP RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS AS MAY BE CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE BANK. THE DECISION OF THE BANK IS FINAL AND BINDING

For inquiries, please call telephone numbers 892-1568 or 818-9511 locals 2117/2150/2105 for Code starting with AM and 818-9511 local 2000/2001 for Code starting with PSM

ASSET MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT &
PROPERTY & SECURITY MANAGEMENT

(PDI--Sept. 14 & 15, 2007)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC



This is to notify the public that
MR. CHRIS BERNARD L. DELA CRUZ
is no longer connected with **MEDICARD PHILIPPINES, INC.** (MPI) effective August 31, 2007. Any transaction made and entered into by him will not be honored by the company.

Those Provisional Receipts issued by Mr. dela Cruz after August 31, 2007 specifically those with Serial Numbers 175431 – 175440, 171781-171790,175861-175863, 175866-175870 and 178171, should not be honored as having been officially issued by MPI.

(PDI – September 15, 2007)

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No. 2 Blk F-1 Subic Techno Park along Argonaut Hway, Subic Bay Freeport Zone
is in need of

ONE (1) QUALITY ASSURANCE DEPARTMENT MANAGER

With the following qualifications: Has at least 5 years extensive exposure / technical knowledge in the Quality Assurance for completed Fan Motor products, process control, evaluation of products, dealing with claim from customer for damage; Has hands on experience on these equipments; three dimensional measuring device; actual circle rate measuring device, special quality tester and multi-meter. Can read, speak and write NIHONGGO; at least 29-36 years old.

Interested applicants may send their resumé with 2x2 recent photo and credentials to:
LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT CENTER
Bldg. 255 Subic Bay Freeport Zone

S.H. ENTERPRISE INC.
is in need of the following
ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER / ACCOUNTING MANAGER / MARKETING MANAGER / ASSISTANT MARKETING MANAGER
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(047) 252-7330 / 252-7950 / 252-7980 Fax No. (047) 252-7331
3 Lots 83 & 84 Efficiency Avenue Subic Bay Industrial Park Phase I, Subic Bay Freeport Zone
or may submit their resume to www.s.h.enterprise@subictel.com

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BOARD OF INVESTMENTS
dti TRADE & INDUSTRY PHILIPPINES

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **DISCOVERY SHORES MARINE TRANSPORT SERVICES** with office address at **211 Rizal Street, Calamba City** is applying for registration with the Board of Investments (BOI) as New **Domestic Producer of Tugboat** on a **Non-Pioneer** Status with capacity of 6 Units per year with a project/plant sites located at **Barangay Palingon, Calamba City, Laguna.**

Any person with valid objection/s on the above-mentioned project may file his/her objection in writing, under oath, with the BOI within three (3) days from the date of this publication.

(Sgd.) **RUDY B. CAÑA**
Director
Project Evaluation and Registration Department

(PDI–September 15, 2007)

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that TELECOMMAND BUSINESS SOLUTIONS INC. is applying for registration with the Board of Investments (BOI) as New IT Export Service Firm in the Field of Operation of a Call Center on a Non-Pioneer Status with project/plant site located at 2168 Don Chino Roces Avenue, Makati City.

Any person with valid objection/s on the above-mentioned project may file his/her objection in writing, under oath, with the BOI within three (3) days from the date of this publication

(Sgd.) RUDY B. CAÑA
Director
Project Evaluation and Registration Department

Industry & Investments Building 385 Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenue Makati City Philippines
Tel.: (632) 897-6682 Fax Nos. (632) 895-3521 (IPO) (632) 895-3981 (IG) (632) 895-3978 (TSC (632) 890-3051 (AD) E-mail OSAC@boi.gov.ph Homepage http://www.boi.gov.ph
Cable address INVESTBOARD P.O. Box 1872 Makati

(PDI--Sept. 15, 2007)

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Tel. No. 9839551 to 56
CP#0917-8272641
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---

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Head Office: 897-8808 loc. 514, 516; 899-4425; 899-4427; 897-8425 (Telefax)
Cubao: 912-9008 to 11 (Aurora)
Makati: 892-5578; 811-4361; 811-4370
Kalaw: 528-0213; 527-3342
Megamall: 635-0219; 635-0220

More Classified Ads

Department of Labor and Employment–NCR	Page A19
National Transmission Corporation	Page A19
South Cotabato II Electric Cooperative	Page A19
TVI Resource Dev't. Phils., Inc.	Page A19

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Hernando P. Limsin

President, Foundation of Outstanding Mapuans, Inc.
Past President, National Association of Mapua Alumni, Inc.
Past President, Lauro A. Limuaco Memorial Foundation, Inc.
Founding Director/Adviser, MIT ChE-Chem Alumni Association, Inc.
Founding Trustee/First Vice-President, Mapua Alumni Center Foundation, Inc.

Peacefully joined Our Lord on September 13, 2007 at the age of 72.

The MAPUA alumni community condoles with his wife, Rosita; children, Helen and Yau Tak Hu, Natalie and Custer Tanchip, Ronald and Cristina, and Richard; grandchildren; and requests the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Sanctuarium, 739 G. Araneta, Quezon City. Interment will be announced later.

Necrological services of the MAPUA alumni community will be held on Sunday, September 16, 2007 at 8:00 p.m.

CLASSIFIEDS

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

Official Depository Bank of the Republic of the Philippines

INVITATION TO BID

The **Land Bank of the Philippines** invites interested parties to bid for the following properties on **CASH and "AS-IS-WHERE-IS" BASIS**:

Item No.	PROPERTY DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	MINIMUM BID PRICE
1	2 parcels of ind'l lot;TA: 17,729 sqm	Poblacion, Rosario, Cavite	P 31,678,000.00
2	2,189 sqm res'l land w/ 4-storey res'l bldg,and 4-door row house bldg	Road Lot 15 Uding's Cmpd, East Service Road, Alabang, Muntinlupa City	P 16,795,000.00
3	1,646 sqm res'l land w/ 3-storey apartment bldg w/ penthouse	Road Lot 15 Uding's Cmpd, East Service Road, Alabang, Muntinlupa City	P 13,617,000.00
4	1,220 sqm res'l land	Las Terrazas Subd, Brgy., Ma-a, Davao City	P 5,246,000.00
5	240 sqm res'l land w/ improvement	No. 34 Highland St., Rancho Estate IV Subd., Bayan-Bayanan, Marikina City	P 1,792,000.00

Sealed bids together with the 10% bid bond in the form of Cash or Manager's Check will be received by the Special Assets Department (SPAD), 30th Floor, Landbank Plaza, Malate, Manila on **September 28, 2007,** not later than **12:00 nn.**

In case of **CLOSELY CLUSTERED TOP BIDS** (defined as having the second highest bid which is not below 90% of the highest bid), the opening of the sealed bids will be followed immediately by an open bidding in which all bidders whose bids are not below 80% of the highest bid may participate. **The increase in the open bidding shall be in multiples of P10,000.00.**

The Bid Documents will be available at the Special Assets Dept. (c/o May or Tiffany) starting September 17, 2007.

The Pre-Bid Conference will be held on September 20, 2007, 2:00 p.m. at the 30th Floor Conference Room, Landbank Plaza, 1598 M.H. Del Pilar St., Malate.

Prospective bidders are enjoined to inspect the above-listed properties as well as the legal status of the title before submitting their bids. The sale of the properties shall be on **"AS-IS-WHERE-IS"** basis. The winning bidder shall take possession of the awarded property without seeking assistance from the Bank. The award in favor of the winning bidder shall be subject to the approval of the LBP approving authorities.

If for any reason the above-mentioned date is declared a non-working holiday, the public bidding shall be held on the next working day at the same time and place aforementioned.

For more information, please visit or call the SPAD at telephone no. 551-2200 locals 2374, 2481, 7248, 2482, 7645.

Landbank reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality therein, and to accept the bid as may be considered most advantageous to the Bank. The decision of Landbank shall be final and binding.

HEAD OFFICE COMMITTEE ON ASSET DISPOSAL

(PDI – September 15, 2007)

More employment opportunities In today's JOB MARKET. Every Sunday with the INQUIRER

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In Memory of Alec's 1st Death Anniversary

Alec

Alessandro Miguel Alonzo Mendoza

July 19, 1994 – September 15, 2006

We thank the so many who loved Alec and the friends whose support help heal the pain of his life's passage.

Holy Mass will be offered at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City today, September 15, 2007 at 3:00 PM.

For your Classified Ads requirements, call our Classifieds Advertising Hotlines:

HEAD OFFICE
897-8808 loc. 514, 516 • 899-4425
897-2535 • 897-8425 (Telefax)

Countdown to Christmas sale

BEAT THE HOLIDAY RUSH. SHOP AT STA. LUCIA East Grand mall from Sept. 14 to 16 during the mallwide 3-Day Sale. Get up to 70 percent discounts on a wide variety of merchandise from over 250 boutiques and specialty stores including Sta. Lucia East Department Store, Supermarkets, Home Gallery and Planet Toys. Redeem a raffle coupon for a single purchase receipt worth P500 in the Grand 16th Anniversary Blowout of Prizes promo that gives shoppers a chance to win a car, home appliances and gift certificates during the Second Grand Draw on Oct. 5. Double redemption of coupons and the chance of winning when presenting P3,000 and above worth of single receipt from Sta. Lucia East Department Store, Supermarket, Home Gallery, Planet Toys and Bowling Center. Every P300 single or accumulated receipt during the 3-Day Sale entitles the shopper to a raffle coupon and the chance to win a Microwave Oven or an I-Pod.

BRUCE JOSEPH WHISENHUNT

...passed away in the Grace of our Lord on September 13, 2007 at the age of 51.

He shall be missed by his wife **Maria Teresa**; children **Nicole Amber & Mikkel Ryan**; mother **Nieves**, brother and sister **Steve & Gail**, his friends and relatives.

Family and friends request the pious readers to join them in praying for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His body lies in state at Sanctuario De San Jose, Greenhills East, San Juan. Cremation will be on Sunday, September 16, 2007 at Loyola Memorial Chapels & Crematorium Inc., Guadalupe, Makati City at 5:00 p.m.

> **"Eternal life will swallow up that which can die. God made us for this very reason and He has given us the Spirit as a guarantee that we will live again."**
>
> —2 Corinthians 5:4-5

BUSINESS

Northrail project gets back on track; new head appointed

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION and Communication (DOTC) yesterday said that the north rail extension project is set to get back on track with a new officer appointed to replace the late Transport Undersecretary Jose Cortes Jr. as chair of the Northrail Corp.

DOTC said Malacañang has appointed former Bases Conversion and Development Authority chairperson Arsenio M. Bartolome III as president, CEO and chair of Northrail.

Bartolome said that when the rail project is finished, it will link Metro Manila with the rest of Luzon by extending the existing route of the Philippine National Railways, boosting trade and tourism.

Only last July, Cortes, the late head of the Northrail Corp., briefed President Macapagal-Arroyo on plans to resume full blast the construction of an 80.2-kilometer railway between Manila and Bulacan in January 2008.

On Aug. 4, Cortes succumbed to a heart attack.

With a new head onboard, the DOTC said it would keep to its timetable, which means construction is still set from February 2007 to February 2010 for Section 1. Section 2 is scheduled for completion a year later.

The 80.2-kilometer railway line will extend from the old Tutuban Philippine National Railways (PNR) station in Manila to Malolos in Bulacan.

The $1.126-billion Northrail project's first section spans Caloocan City, Valenzuela City and five towns of Bulacan, including Meycauayan, Marilao, Bocaue, Guiguinto and Malolos.

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Bid opens for PNOC-EDC stake

PNOC's remaining 60% stake in energy unit will be up for grabs

By Abigail L. Ho

THE STATE-RUN PHILIPPINE National Oil Co. has opened the bidding for its remaining 60-percent stake in PNOC Energy Development Corp.

In an invitation to bid published today, the state firm said that at stake were 6 billion common and 7.5 billion preferred shares representing 26.67 percent and 33.33 percent, respectively, of PNOC-EDC's outstanding capital stock.

Interested entities should submit their letters of interest (LOIs) by noon of Sept. 24. Only those that would submit LOIs by the deadline would be allowed to participate further in the bidding process.

Upon submission of the LOIs, the PNOC privatization committee (Privacom) will furnish potential bidders with the initial pre-qualification guidelines, as well as the form for the confidentiality agreement and undertaking.

Prospective bidders may secure the bidding rules and procedures starting Sept. 21.

A pre-bid conference has been scheduled for Sept. 24, with the deadline for the submission of the initial pre-qualification requirements, including the confidentiality agreement and undertaking, set for Oct. 5.

The PNOC Privacom will release the list of pre-qualified bidders on Oct. 10.

Pre-qualified bidders will be required to pay a non-refundable fee of $5,000 on Oct. 11-12 for them to avail themselves of the draft transaction documents, the information package and the due diligence procedures.

Only those who will pre-qualify may conduct due diligence audit on shares to be sold. This will start no later than Oct. 15.

The pre-qualified bidders will then be required to submit final qualification documents by 7 p.m. of Oct. 26, with those who are able to pass the final screening to be given until 9 a.m. of Nov. 21 to turn in their bids.

In preparation for its privatization, PNOC-EDC has tapped Sycip Gorres Velayo and Co. as its new external auditor, replacing the Commission on Audit.

PNOC-EDC company information officer Erudito Recio said the contract with SGV will last three years, starting on the calendar year ending Dec. 31, subject to yearly performance evaluation and engagement renewal.

In an earlier interview, Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said the sale of the PNOC EDC stake would fetch as much as P36 billion for the government.

The Development Bank of the Philippines will serve as financial advisor for the sale.

DOE expects P12B in ethanol investments

IN PREPARATION FOR THE MANDATED use of gasoline with a 5-percent ethanol blend next year, the Department of Energy expects some P12 billion to be invested in ethanol plants.

Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes said the DOE had granted six companies endorsements for Board of Investments registration under the Investments Priorities Plan.

"We are looking at P12 billion in investments to generate a combined annual production capacity of around 240 million liters, to support the projected demand of 223 million liters in 2009," he said yesterday in a statement.

He said the DOE had received good response from investors wanting to delve into ethanol production.

The facilities of San Carlos Bioenergy Inc., one of the companies with a BOI endorsement, in Negros Occidental is now under construction and will be operational in the fourth quarter of 2008.

The other companies with BOI endorsements include JG Summit Holdings Inc., Biofuels 88 Corp., Leyte Agri Corp. and South Bukidnon Bioenergy Inc.

Reyes revealed that eight more companies had expressed "serious commitment" to enter the ethanol business and had, in turn, received DOE endorsement for registration with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

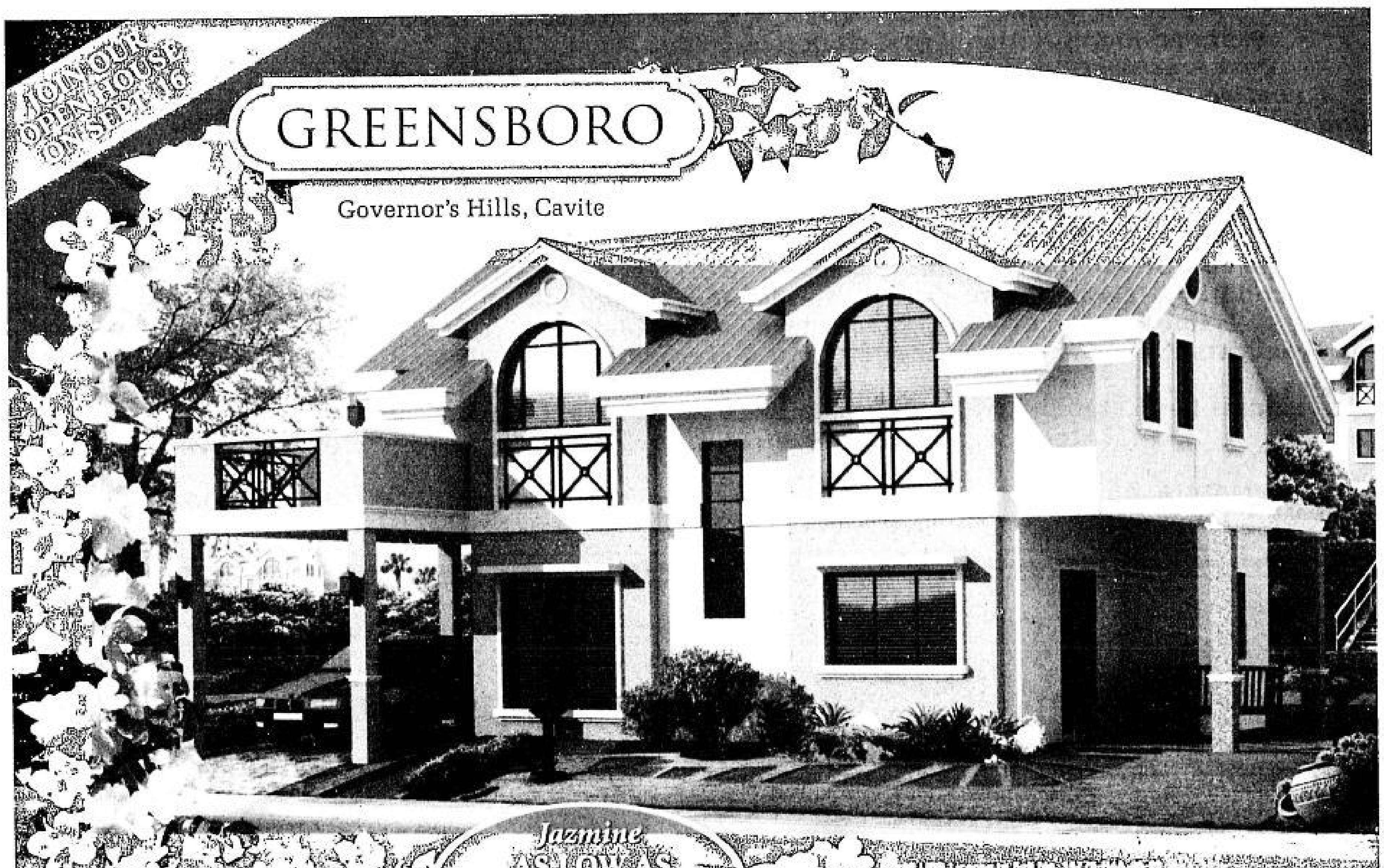
These companies are First Pampanga Biofuels Corp., Zambo Norte Bioenergy Corp., Renewable Alternative Fuel Inc., Kanlaon Alcogreen, Negros Green Resources, Pampanga Industrial Park, Hope 8 Manufacturing and Trading Corp., Eastern Renewables Fuels Corp. and Petrolift Holdings Inc.

Letters of interest continued to pour in, Reyes said, including some from Negros Southern Integrated Biofuels Corp., JG Itochu, Tamlang Valley Ethanol, BM SB Integrated Biofuels, Negros Biochem Corp., Fuel Inc. and Ginebra San Miguel Inc.

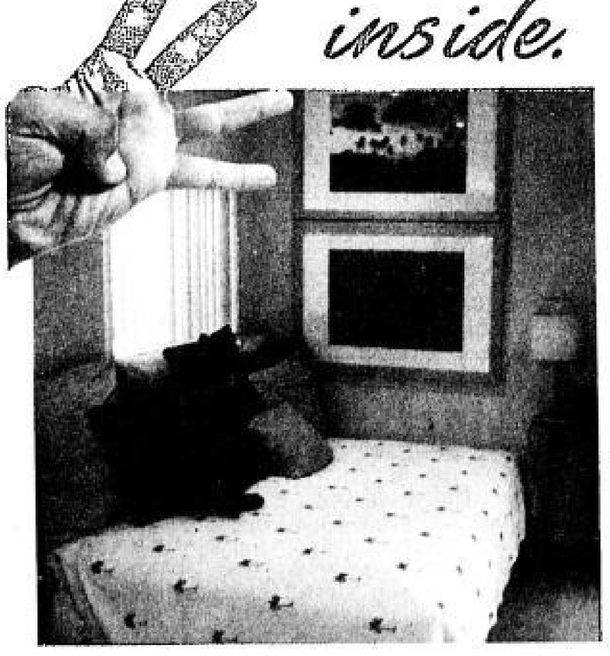
Possible investments of more than P20 billion from these companies, he said, could translate to 621.6 million liters of ethanol a year.

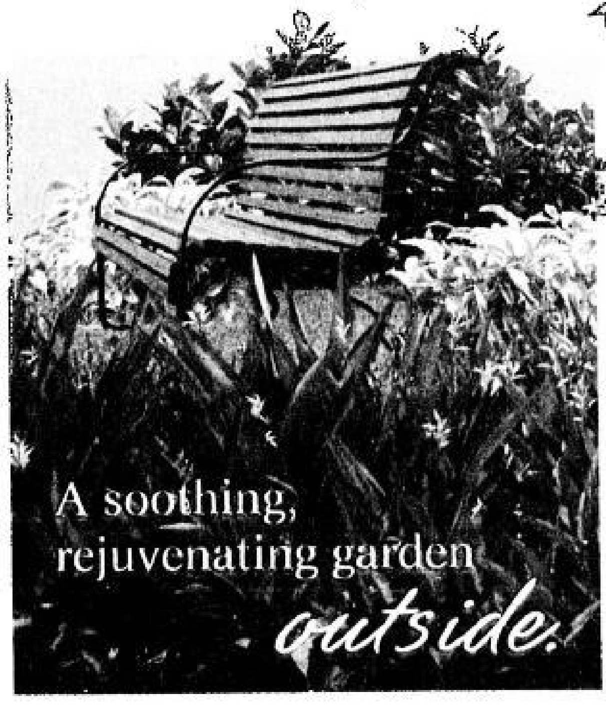
Even before the implementation of the mandated blend, he said 144 service stations all over the country were already selling gasoline with a 10-percent ethanol blend.

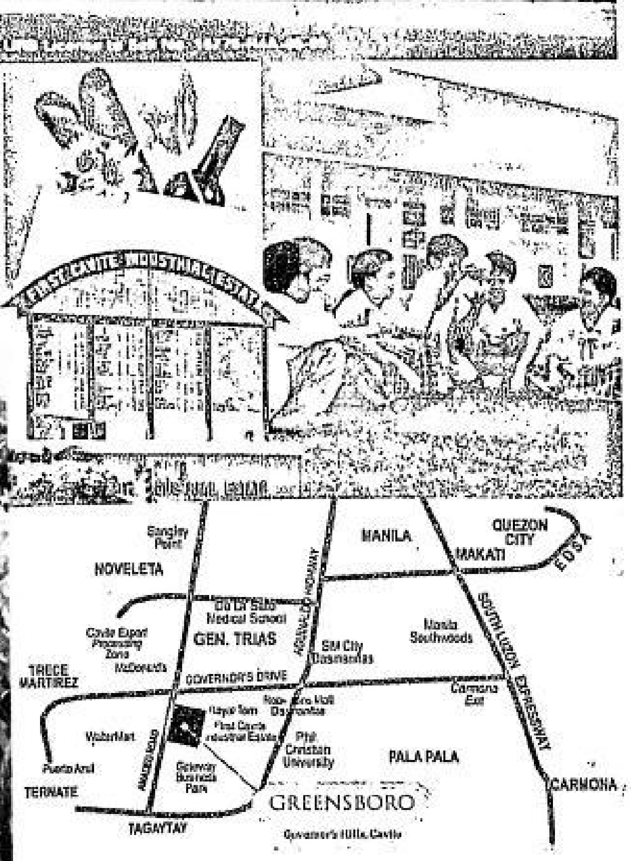
Abigail L. Ho



Not 1, not 2, not 3 but 4 cozy bedrooms *inside.*







Easy-to-reach places *all around.*

At Greensboro's Jazmine, there's more than enough space for the family to bond. To bloom. This full two-story home features a well-planned master's bedroom with a spacious dressing area. Plus three cozy bedrooms for your children to claim as their very own. On top of these are a family hall and veranda, where you and your loved ones can bask in the beauty of your exciting new life…together.

Nature's so near here at Greensboro. Nestled in your village is an exclusive picture-perfect park called Hampstead Gardens. Breathe in fresh, fragrant air. Relax in shaded sitting areas. And savor the calming sight of lush greenery all around. What's more, Governor's Hill's play area is a stone's throw away. Here, an array of leisure amenities beckons. From a swimming pool complex, clubhouse and multipurpose court. To a gazebo, fountain and landscaped walkways.

Enjoy the luxury of exceptional mobility at Greensboro. From here, reach important places easily. The Governor's Hills Science School and a 1.8-hectare town center are just a leisurely walk away. A short commute away are top industrial zones such as Cavite First Industrial Estate and Gateway Business Park. Just as accessible are De La Salle and St. Scholastica's College and Makro, SM and Robinsons Dasmariñas.

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Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

Build-and-sell worthwhile risk, former OFW says

By Tessa R. Salazar

REYNALDO FLORES, 46, and Zenaida Fajardo-Flores, 48, never thought they would someday build and sell properties for other people.

Reynaldo was a project engineer and estimator of buildings in Saudi Arabia from 1986 to 1987, and from 1991 to 1993, while wife Zenaida, who has a fine arts background, borrowed money from her parents to put up a small grocery store and refreshments dealership.

In 1986, Zenaida was able to build a duplex from the 160-sq-m lot she bought at North Susana in Commonwealth, Quezon City. She offered half of the duplex for rent, and its earnings helped her pay the P500,000 housing loan from the Social Security System.

Through loans

By the time RG Flores Construction started building and selling property and houses in 1993, Zenaida had sold the duplex, applied once more for a loan from the bank, as well as loan from her sister, and then bought a 246-sq-m lot also at North Susana worth P1.4 million.

The husband and wife team cut the 246 lots into two. They built a 2-story residential house at the 106-sq-m lot, which was quickly sold for P2.8 million. The remaining 140-sq-m lot, which already had a house-and-lot concept, was sold for P3.8 million (the ready plan was sold along with the lot).

> 'If you don't take a loan, you won't grow. But it is important to manage your finances'

The Floreses again used the money to buy the lot beside the old one. This lot was quickly sold to a TV newscaster. After that sale, the Floreses bought another lot in North Susana and built a house over it. A show-biz celebrity bought this house and lot for P6.8 million.

THE FLORESES' construction project in Canyon Woods, Tagaytay

Referrals

Developers started noticing the Flores couple's designs and asked for their help in construction. One of the Floreses' buyers referred the couple to Monterey meat shops, where eventually RG Flores Construction became its builders. Zenaida told INQUIRER Property in a phone interview that currently RG Flores Construction builds the Netopia chain of Internet cafés.

Zenaida credits the couple's hard work to the three bundle of joy—a son and two daughters. Their courses are medical technology, architecture and the youngest in high school.

The Floreses expanded business to buying and selling seven units of townhouses in Cubao, three units in Scout Fuentebella (367 sq m), a duplex in Scout Chuatoco (200 sq m) and five units in Project 6 (505 sq m). The company is also working on the layout of another project in Don Antonio Heights in Quezon City.

IN THEIR construction biz, Reynaldo and Zenaida credit hardwork, luck, and the right amount of gut feel.

Zenaida said that although the build-and-sell business pays off well, many loans have to be paid, too.

Buying viable land

With property and houses in North Susana, Cubao, and Quezon City among others, the Floreses have risen and strengthened their business in building and selling. A crucial aspect of their success is their principle of immediately buying viable land, including those foreclosed by banks.

The Floreses recently took out a mortgage loan from GE Money Bank to buy the Don Antonio Heights.

"If you don't take a loan, you won't grow. But it is important to manage your finances," she said.

The 8.75 percent fixed annual interest rate and a loan of P1.5 million (with a free GE ref worth P33,000) sealed the Floreses' decision to choose GE Money Bank. Zenaida said it took just five working days to release the loan.

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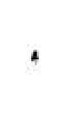

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Brittany unveils 2 new luxury homes at Portofino

MAVERICK REAL ESTATE DEVELOPER Brittany Corp. has unveiled two new luxury model homes for its charmingly master-planned Portofino development.

Brittany, a proud member of Vista Land & Lifescapes Inc., the country's largest home builder, expects these additions to significantly enhance the appeal of this Italian-inspired community.

Befitting a true master

Timeless opulence best describes the recently unveiled model home of The Masters Collection. Aptly called Van Gogh, it is a true reflection of the lifestyle of a homeowner who appreciates the finest that life has to offer.

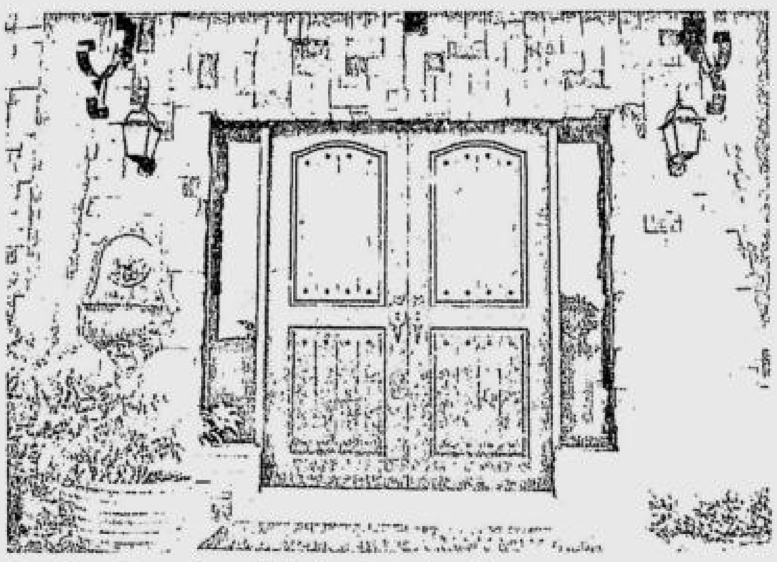
It features a spacious living room area to entertain guests, and a conservatory connecting the living and dining areas to the side courtyard—a perfect milling area for cocktails and parties. The second level has its own family area for more intimate interactions while a balcony at the attic provides a space for more romantic moments.

The Master's Collection

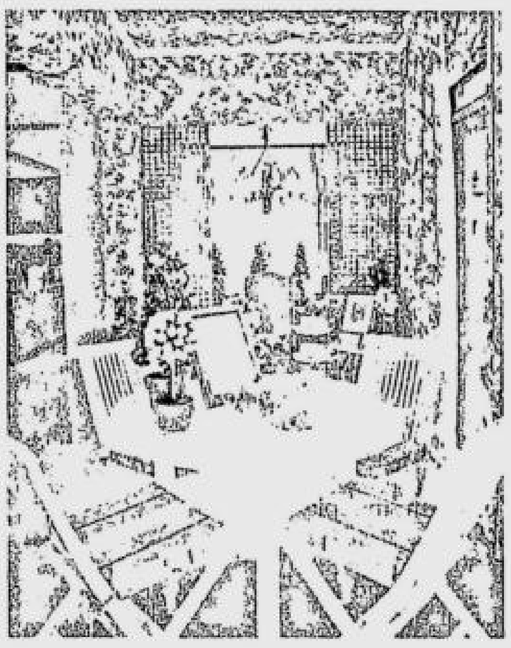
The Masters Collection in the roster of Brittany's homes of distinction redefines what it means to live large. Rather than creating a separate enclave, these homes are intended to be integrated within the entire Portofino development. The collection includes six model homes with floor areas ranging from 330 to 625 sq m. Lot sizes reach to as much as 1,000 sqm. For as long as the client has a lot within the Portofino development that meets the required lot range, he can choose a home that is part of the Masters Collection.

Just like the rest of the Portofino development, the Masters Collection still carries the Italian theme, though on a grander scale. In these homes, much-loved features such as courtyards, cupolas, and balconies are magnified.

Aside from the size and scale, it is the use of space that also sets the Masters Collection apart. Three of the model homes have an atrium on the second floor. The other three, however, have a second casita which can be converted into another guest bedroom or even a private study.



THE STONE-CLAD façade and curved embellishments give the Amanti a rustic yet modern feel.



MOVE with ease inside Van Gogh's bright and airy living room.

Completing Amore

Recently unveiled is Amanti—the latest model home of Amore of Portofino. From the outside, a double-door entrance immediately greets the guests, treating them to a grander access into this cozy home. It features an open floor plan for living and dining areas that allow guests and family to move freely around these shared spaces. It also has a spacious bedroom at the ground level that can be converted into a masters' bedroom should stair-climbing prove to be a less-than-ideal option for the older members of the household.

The launch of the Amanti is another milestone for Brittany as it completes the full cluster of Amore homes. A Brittany lay-out innovation, Amore of Portofino is an 11-hectare enclave unique for its clusters—an assemblage of four single-detached residential units with a common paved driveway and a landscaped pocket garden. The clusters offer further exclusivity in an enclave that is already extremely secure. The other Amore model homes are Tavola, Rossini and Arezzo.

Drawing inspiration from rustic Tuscany, Amore further distinguishes itself from other Portofino enclaves through various architectural details. The cupola, among others, is unique because it is squarish, while the cupolas in other Portofino developments like the Courtyards are circular.

Brittany is a maverick real estate developer of innovative and creative lifescapes. Its eclectic and vibrant portfolio includes Brittany Bay, CrossWinds, Portofino, The Islands, Mosaic at Greenbelt, and Avant at The Fort. With masterplanned developments steeped in character, stylistic and thematic appeal, rich architectural details and excellent craftsmanship, it successfully and continuously reinvents the local real estate landscape.

For inquiries and property previews, please call 850-2868 or 850-3084, or visit www.brittany.com.ph.

Edsa Central Greenfield District riding high with new business wave

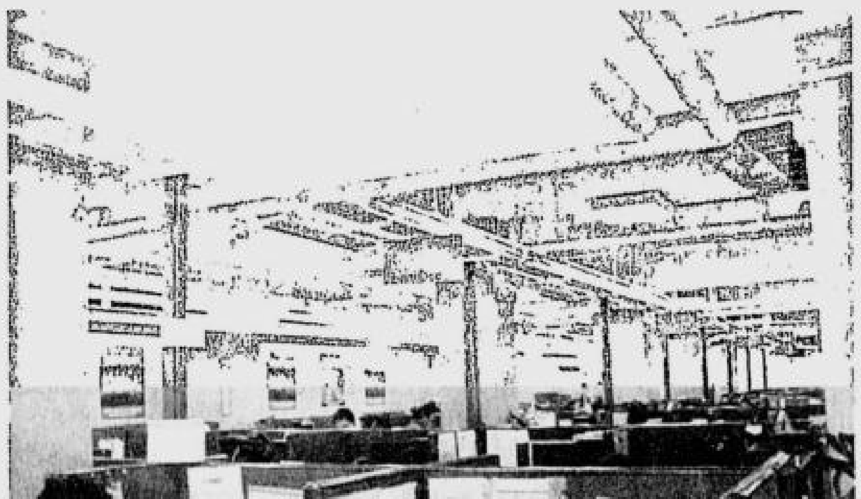
IN LINE WITH THE PHILIPPINES' establishing position as a major player in the global Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) market, Greenfield Development Corp.'s Edsa Central rises as the location of choice for businesses and organizations looking to set up or expand their operations in the country. With several organizations building office spaces here, Edsa Central has proven itself a viable alternative to the now heavily saturated business districts of Ortigas and Makati.

One of the companies that have chosen Edsa Central as its base was OSRP, which provides diversified back-office operations to its parent company, PC Mall. A publicly listed US company, PC Mall is a technology provider that markets various IT products and services to individuals, small companies, medium-size and top US corporations, or anyone with an interest in putting up a business and needs to be technology-enabled.

First BPO tenant

OSRP was Edsa Central's first BPO tenant, setting up offices two years ago with only 50 employees comprising five departments. Today, OSRP has more than 400 employees in 82 departments, all of which provide critical back-office support to PC Mall's businesses in the United States and Canada.

"We are not hiring for just two positions like call centers; we are hiring for 82 different departments," shared Sean LeFebrvre, general manager of OSRP. "OSRP has representation of every single department in the United States and Canada offices; all our functionalities, like marketing, content development, IT and accounting, are here. This is why we attract people from different avenues for positions unique to the Philippines yet very centric to the US market."



TODAY, OSRP based in Edsa Central Greenfield District has more than 400 employees in 82 departments.

Expansion plans

Because of its fast growth, OSRP has had to expand its operations three times, and its management has been more than pleased with Greenfield Development Corp.'s support.

The continuous improvement of Edsa Central Greenfield District was also beneficial to locators like OSRP. "One of the primary reasons we set up operations here is that of the assurance that Edsa Central will be a Peza (Philippine Economic Zone Authority)-accredited area," related Roger Laciste, director for human resources of OSRP. Greenfield Development has been working steadily toward its goal of making Edsa Central a true cyber zone, a complete IT center where people and businesses converge.

As it houses retail, offices and other establishments, as well as residential, Edsa Central Greenfield District has become an ideal place to work or do business. Employees of locator companies have within easy reach a variety of dining, shopping and recreation destinations. And because of its prime location in the middle of the metropolis, Edsa Central Greenfield District provides true accessibility with the number of transportation options available to workers.

Portello a themed enclave in Batangas

BATANGAS HAS GAINED FAME FOR THE lure of its world-class dive sites and beaches which continue to attract both foreign and local tourists. A strong economy and continuous industrialization makes it one of the fastest progressing areas in the south. These advancements are also complemented by the close proximity of Batangas from the southern skirt of the metropolis. Communities Philippines brought its real estate expertise to Sto. Tomas, Batangas and created an ideal site in which to raise families in its exclusive residential development, Portello.

A proud subsidiary of Vista Land & Lifescapes Inc., Communities Philippines is the expert in converting the countryside into a landscape of sought-after enclaves and is the first Manila-based developer to expand operations into key cities and municipalities across the country. Vista Land is the Philippines' largest homebuilder offering the broadest spectrum of homes for all income segments and catering to different lifestyles across the entire country.

The 50-hectare, Italian-inspired residential estate of Portello is located in Barangay San Vicente in Sto. Tomas which is close to other booming Batangas towns like Calamba, San Pablo, Tanauan and Laurel.

Wide selection

A wide selection of home and lot packages are available to complement various living requirements and finances: the Bungalow Series, for individuals and beginning families who wish to invest in a home all to their own, features Rosemary, Chamomile, Cranberry, Citronella and Celandine with floor areas ranging from 31 to 72 sq m on a 88- to 156-sq-m lot; and full two-story residences, for growing families, offers Lavender, Petunia, Amaranth, Crossandra, Althaea, Cypress and Aspen with floor areas ranging from 66 to 200 sq m on a 110- to 225-sq-m lot. Price begins at P699,000. A new series suited for beginning families are also available: Aster, Lilac, Peony, Iris and Thyme with a floor area starting at 25 to 42 sq m on a 77- to 110-sq-m lot.

RESIDE in your own Italian-themed, full two-storey home at the exclusive enclave of Portello.

With its first phase almost sold out in less than a year, Portello is slated to open its second phase in the third quarter of 2007 to accommodate more families desiring a comfortable home in this exclusive enclave in Sto. Tomas, Batangas.

Portello's new access road going to Tanauan is currently in progress to establish Sto. Tomas as the next gateway to the south. The strategic location of Portello is just 30 minutes away from the commercial and business district of Alabang, 15 minutes from the Calamba exit to the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX), seven minutes away from the Micarelli School and Cabrini Hospital, and three minutes from Laurel and Maharlika Highway junction. For inquiries on Communities Philippines' themed development in Batangas, call (043) 7786518 or 0917-8576399 or log on to www.commphil.com.

Antel Spa Residences built with functional esthetics

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN PLAYS A PIVOTAL role in achieving an edifice that emphasizes both function and style. Years of harnessing a perfect construction methodology that supports both features lead to the dawning of New Age Design, which carries with it the revolutionary Structure as Design concept.

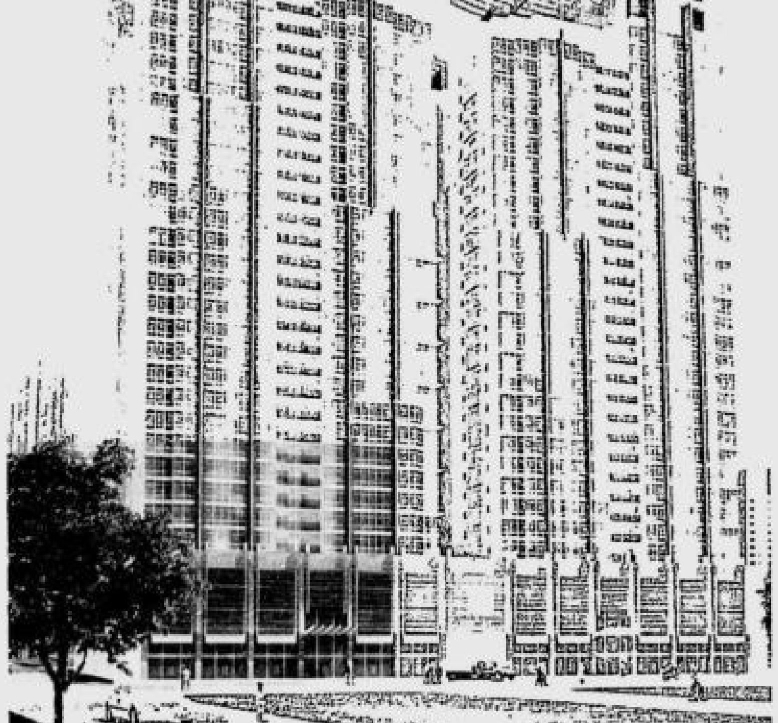
Such concept is a unique construction technique that perfectly melds science and art—the same scheme that is set to inspire the architectural splendor of Antel Spa Residences, Makati Avenue's highly anticipated residential tower.

Maximizing spaces

As conceptualized by Edward Co Tan + Architects, Antel Land Holdings Inc. is set to integrate the structure as design concept in the 29-story skyscraper. The construction theory will bestow ASR the modernity of new age designing with esthetically functional installations that will create maximum space-saving features which will prevent unsightly, protruding exteriors—like electro-mechanical components or plumbing networks—to either block or occupy a limited floor area.

"Structure as design is a suitable and highly recommended concept that comfortably meets the standards of modern architecture: one that is superbly done and functional.

With its employment at the onset, unpleasant sightings such as protruding wire connections or beams crossing along the center of a room are avoided. Thus, Antel Spa Residences, which is set to utilize this contemporary construction method, isn't only sturdily built; it is also perpetually pleasing to the eyes," said Edward Co Tan, ASR chief master planner.



THE MODERN architecture of Antel Spa Residences merges both esthetics and functionality to offer the best of both worlds in the newest spa-inspired lifestyle tower.

ANTEL Spa Residences embodies the perfected 'structure as design' approach.

According to him, structure as design is best suited for ASR's wide range of suites (studio, one-bedroom, two-bedroom, two-bedroom bilevel and three-bedroom bilevel) to maximize room space or volume.

With its 397 visually striking suites made beamless and pillarless, future ASR tenants can delightfully add their own style and taste without worrying whether their chosen furniture pieces would not fit in. They are also privileged to jazz up their units with avant garde décors, thus creativity and freedom are well-supported by this state-of-the-art construction technique.

Functional features

Aside from beamless and column-free floor layouts, structure as design will also allow the inventive installation of many contemporary add-ons to ASR's suites such as 2.6-meter ceiling height, wide windows for lighting and ventilation, sound-proofed and fire-proofed walls, floors and ceilings, imported modular kitchen cabinet system, vinyl wood planks for bedroom/living room, imported bathroom fixtures, latex-coated walls as well as automatic alarm and sprinkler systems.

Antel Spa Residences is a wellness-inspired lifestyle residential tower that houses a plethora of invigorating wellness amenities and services such as massage and spa parlors, his/hers sauna rooms, an alternative healing center for herbal medications and detoxification processes, a Wellness Academy that offers the latest trends in health such as proper dieting, Pilates, yoga and other calisthenics as well as a fully equipped gym for personalized fitness workouts.

Conveniently located facilities that support overall enhancement are also in store for ASR's future residents like a 25-meter resort and kiddie spa pools that are equipped with jet stream, bamboo canopies and cobblestone pathways, a sky infinity pool, a meditative nature trail, upscale beauty and medical clinics as well as an organic market and restaurant.

The Antel Spa Residences is set to stand in Antel Lifestyle City's 1.7-hectare solid grounds, joining other significant edifices—The A. Venue Residences, a modern residential tower that will also encompass the innovative functionality of the structure as design concept and A. Venue Event Mall, which will house a variety of high-end dining bars, clubs, coffee shops, themed bazaars and a 2,000-sq-m international standard events hall.

A marriage of function and design

DESIGN DIMENSIONS

Isabel Berenguer Asuncion

FOR MY CHILDREN, THE black-and-white television sets of their parents' childhood are a source of hilarity. And when I compare what we had then to what they now have, I can understand why.

The center of activity in my parent's family room was a stand-alone wooden cabinet with four legs and a pair of slide-away doors. It had some exotic European timber in a lustrous finish and a fabric cover for its lopsided speaker. The picture tube monitor must have been all of 14 inches.

One day, my father came home with a new color television. It was the first of its kind—one of those Sony TVs sans the wooden cabinet enclosure. It sat on an open trolley bearing the same brand name. Through the years, our TV sets evolved. But as technology progressed, they were primarily functional pieces. After many years of waiting for some marked improvement in their shape and size, we finally enjoy the flat, sleek and polished LCDs, plasmas and HDTVs of this generation.

TV area hub of activities

If one thing has not changed, it is that the family room remains the center of the home and the TV area as the hub of its activities. Fortunately, TV sets have become more esthetically gratifying in appearance. In the picture-tube technology days of the '80s, there was a strong trend to hide TV sets and related audio equipment into armoires or large built-in cabinets that could conceal the depth and massiveness of the unit.

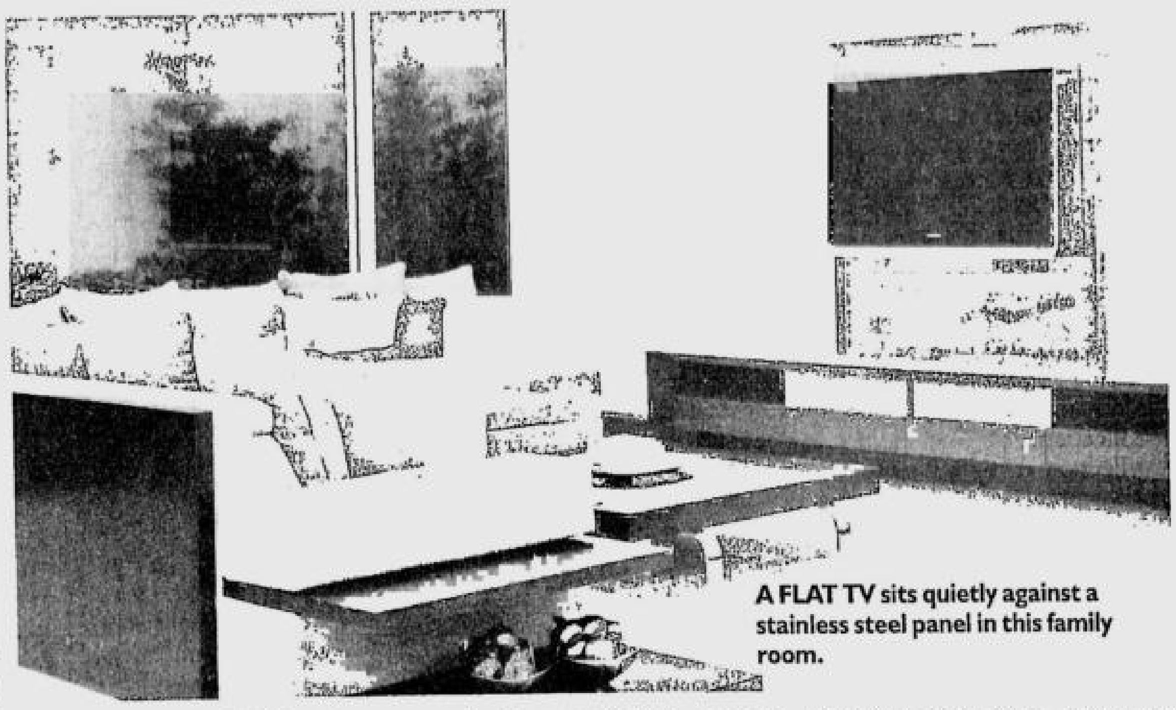
Back then, space was also an issue since a larger screen size meant a deeper TV unit and more area needed to accommodate it in a room. Nowadays, all TV units are practically flat (well, just a few inches thick anyway), and manufacturers of audio video equipment have jumped onto the lifestyle bandwagon and have products that harmonize with current interior and industrial design trends.

Well-designed systems

More than just being sleek, the current systems are so well designed, they are statements in themselves. Their parts and accessories come in colors and details that are subtle and neutral, much in keeping with what the times demand.

For instance, TV units that come with DVD players and a five-speaker system have brackets for rear speakers and pedestal stands for front speakers, all in coordinated details, colors and finishes. TV sets can be bought with matching TV stands. Arranged symmetrically against an accent wall, the assembly becomes a visually integrated system that is decorative in itself. Equipment no longer need to be hidden. Free-standing equipment also translates to more freedom for future upgrading with the quick advancements in technology.

As technology becomes more seemingly complicated, our esthetic choices become easier. Design-related issues are less of a problem, thanks to the new generation of flat TV technology. Nevertheless, it is highly likely that 20 years from now, our grandchildren will be giggling about the TV units to which their parents were glued. Can't wait to see what their TV sets will be like then.



A FLAT TV sits quietly against a stainless steel panel in this family room.

A preview to the most fashionable windows

"WINDOW FASHIONS" IS A TERM that Hunter Douglas has coined and rightfully owned. For decades it has successfully transformed the window from a functional requirement into an architectural esthetic—a design and accent piece.

And Hunter Douglas showcases some of its most fashionable window designs in a fashion editorial with two of the most in-demand names in the fashion industry—Frank Hoefsmit and Patrick Ty.

Fashionable windows

"It's very high fashion," says fashion photographer Frank Hoefsmit of Hunter Douglas' window fashions. "It not only serves its immediate purpose, but complements the design of a room as well."

Hoefsmit's works have appeared in major glossy magazines and broadsheets as well in numerous advertising materials.

Fashion editor Patrick Ty likewise lauds Hunter Douglas esthetic superiority.

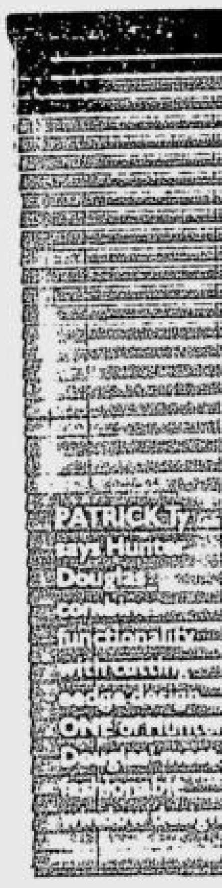
"Hunter Douglas has successfully combined functionality with cutting-edge design. In fact, its products serve as perfect backdrops for fashion shoots," notes the stylist who is also behind some of the best images that have appeared in billboards and print ads for major corporations.

Designers' pick

And millions of interior designers and decorators worldwide have proven that when it comes not just to superb quality and functionality, but to design as well, Hunter Douglas is the top choice.

Its wide selection of window fashions—which include shadings, sheers, louvers, shades, blinds and shutters—can be found in the world's leading establishments.

These include the offices of PriceWaterhouse Coopers in the United States, the Guangzhou International Events Center in China, the Messe Munchen International in Germany, the Radisson SAS Hotel in Denmark, the Reebok International Distribution Center in The Netherlands and the University of Calgary and the L'Oreal Headquarters in Canada.



Moving in quick with Super Easy Home

CAN YOU DREAM OF WOODSville Viverde's nature-bound home and have it sooner than you think? This can be so as Robinsons Land Corp. sets completion of Woodsville Viverde Mansions ready for buyers who are moving in before the year ends. Buyers need not wait five years before enjoying suburban living in the healthful setting of Woodsville Viverde.

What's more, Robinsons Land enables buyers to acquire these homes with easy financing terms, helping them get past the down payment hurdle.

Woodsville Viverde Mansions is the master-planned gated community of mid-rise condominiums only 10 minutes drive from Ayala Avenue. It is beside Merville, Parañaque, between Bicutan and Nichols interchanges.

Well-crafted financing deal

In partnership with BPI Family Savings Bank, Robinsons Land offers to Woodsville Viverde Mansions buyers Super Easy Home, a well-crafted financing deal. Under the scheme, for as low as P13,800 a month, buyers may move into their dream 2-bedroom units within 15 months. The prearranged BPI Family Savings Bank loan enables the buyers then to have the balance payable up to 15 years.

Robinsons Land is confident that Super Easy Home is only one of the many ways by which the real estate conglomerate helps Filipino families attain truly satisfying modes of living.

Robinsons Land, a leading Philippine property developer, makes Filipino families truly glad to be home at Woodsville Viverde Mansions where community life melds with nature and urban convenience.

Within a three-hectare development with 70 percent open space, the expansive development makes residents breathe and enjoy precious laid-back suburban atmosphere. They also delight in Robinsons Land's offering of a village mall and seven well-conceived enclaves of nature-surrounded amenities.

All these features make Robinsons Land's Woodsville Viverde Mansions the only property development of its kind in Parañaque.

7 enclaves

The property's seven landscaped zones feature distinct amenities for special interests, such as sports, arts, theater, picnicking and socials.

The Oasis hosts the clubhouse, multipurpose courts and swimming pools. The Picnic Grove has inviting spots for family eat-outs amid greeneries and trees. The Fun Park is kiddie paradise, sand lots, outdoor playground and bicycle track. The Fitness Cove is perfect for active youth and adults with its Sport Center, featuring a badminton court and an outdoor Fitness Place.

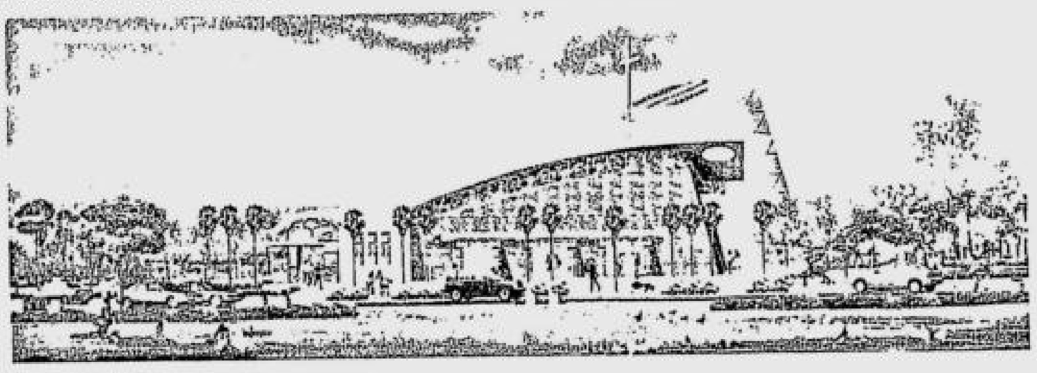
The Poet's Nook is the place where imagination reigns for those who seek reading moments and leisure strolls. The Nirvana Cove, for its part, takes residents to a different plane out of meditation and relaxation. The Nature's Orchestra, which hosts a mini amphitheater, provides space for impressive expression during events and community socials.

For more information on Woodsville Viverde Mansions and Super Easy Home, you may call 636-08-88 or 0922-838-08-88 or e-mail properties@robinsonsland.com.

Lakeshore donates P60M lot to Diocese of San Fernando

AS PROMISED, A CHURCH AT THE world-renowned Lakeshore estate in Mexico, Pampanga will soon rise. Groundbreaking rites were held recently at The Lakeshore as part of its anniversary activities. Owner and developer Central Country Estate Inc. (CCEI) has donated around 5,862 square meters of land worth approximately P60 million to the Diocese of San Fernando.

The groundbreaking of the church was graced by Archbishop Paciano B. Aniceto, D.D., Auxiliary Bishop Ambo David, Fr. Deogracia Kerr Galang, Mayor and Mrs. Teddy Tumang and CCEI top officials. A ceremonial lowering of the foundation capsule took place, followed by the signing of the memorandum of agreement on the lot donation.



ARCHITECT'S perspective of the church

Church design, special features

The church was designed by NS Mangio and Associates. Its floor area would be around 2,500 square meters and would be able to accommodate 1,000 persons, sitting down.

Special features of the church include a crying room for children, a 400 square meter choir loft and a baptismal room. Contemporary in design, the church will look like a dove with wings spread from the top view. The façade will be enclosed by glass curtains to allow the viewing of the picturesque man-made lake. Stained glass will adorn the façade's upper portion.

The funds for the church construction will be raised by the community. Architect Nestor S. Mangio, CCEI president and CEO, has donated his personal lot to be used as a grand prize in a raffle intended to raise the initial funds to jumpstart the construction. CCEI believes that faith unites people, that is why they are involving the community in putting up the church.

A French Colonial house

TO MANY WHO WANT TO ESCAPE THE hustle and bustle of the city and live a life of total comfort in a distinguished French home, Versailles came to life. Such was one of the aspirations of State Properties Corp. when the firm thought of developing Versailles, adapting the elegance and comfort of this famous French landmark.

One of the model houses that now stand on the 75-hectare Versailles project is called Amelie. This is only one of three model houses that Palafox Associates designed for Versailles where the concept of French Colonial architecture was adapted, a type of structural design which dates back in the late 1870s.

Design inspiration

According to Palafox Associates, they used the French Colonial architecture as their inspiration for the design but fused it with our own culture.

"Amelie boasts of having spacious areas, maximum use of natural light and ventilation, and the use of appropriate materials that make the house a complete package that is practical yet very elegant," said architect Gabby Martinez of Palafox Associates.

Finest materials

It basically uses the finest materials, such as concrete roof tiles, and homogenous tiles and laminated wood that make up the floor. The kitchen is provided with modular cabinet, granite countertop and stainless steel kitchen sink. Bathrooms are of two-tone ceramic wall tiles, and with fixtures such as pedestal type lavatory, and concealed bath mixing faucet.

"The company uses only high-quality materials in each and every detail of the house, but in spite of this, I can say that the house doesn't have a hefty price tag," an SPC official said.

Martinez enthused that the development of Amelie took them a while but it had resulted to an intelligently planned layout with well-coordinated finishings.

Amelie is a very interesting rendition in the exclusive cluster of model houses. Designed and improved for showroom quality, walls were further treated with textured stucco-like wallpaper on the ground floor with lavish curtain draping and embossed fabric on sofas and dining chairs, setting an entirely different environment that emulates an extravagant yet casual chic lifestyle. Porcelain crystal tiles with glass mosaic as accent makes up the ground floor finish.

Door casings were embellished with carved resin borders to enhance the 2.40-meter-high custom-made doors that are richly stained in oak finish. Iron balusters on staircase are of verdigris finish while the handrail is of solid carved wood in oak finish.

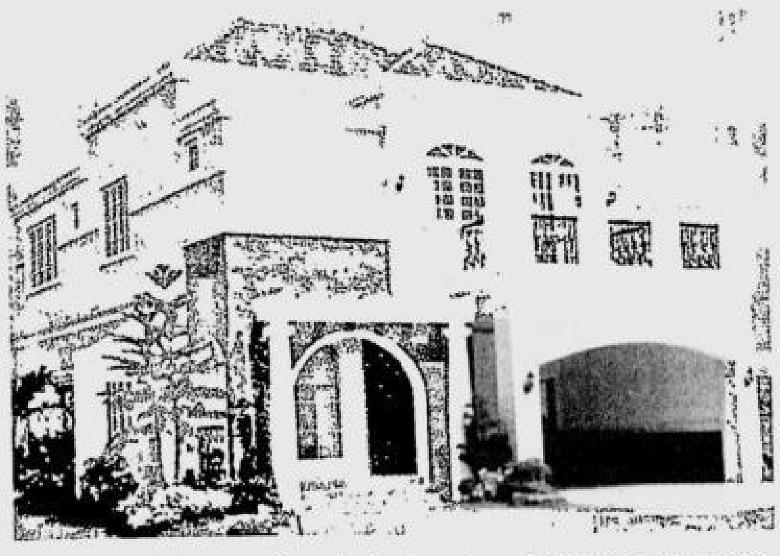
Dining room ceiling

One of the most interesting parts of the house is the dining room ceiling featuring a false "vaulted and beamed" ceiling treatment. Vaulted ceiling was done in stucco paint finish while the false beams are in wood stain finish.

All pieces of furniture used were custom made, high-back fully upholstered sofa, wood and iron-combination coffee table, console table and side tables, wrought-iron beds and even accent mirrors were carefully designed and manufactured to bring out the whole character of the unit, not to mention the special lighting fixtures that add a romantic appeal.

Amelie totally creates an aura of elegance. The intricacies of every detail of this house is an impressive showcase of one's taste of timeless sophistication.

For a special schedule for site visit, please call 242-1521 to 30 or e-mail at stateproperties@versailles-phils.com.



AMELIE model house

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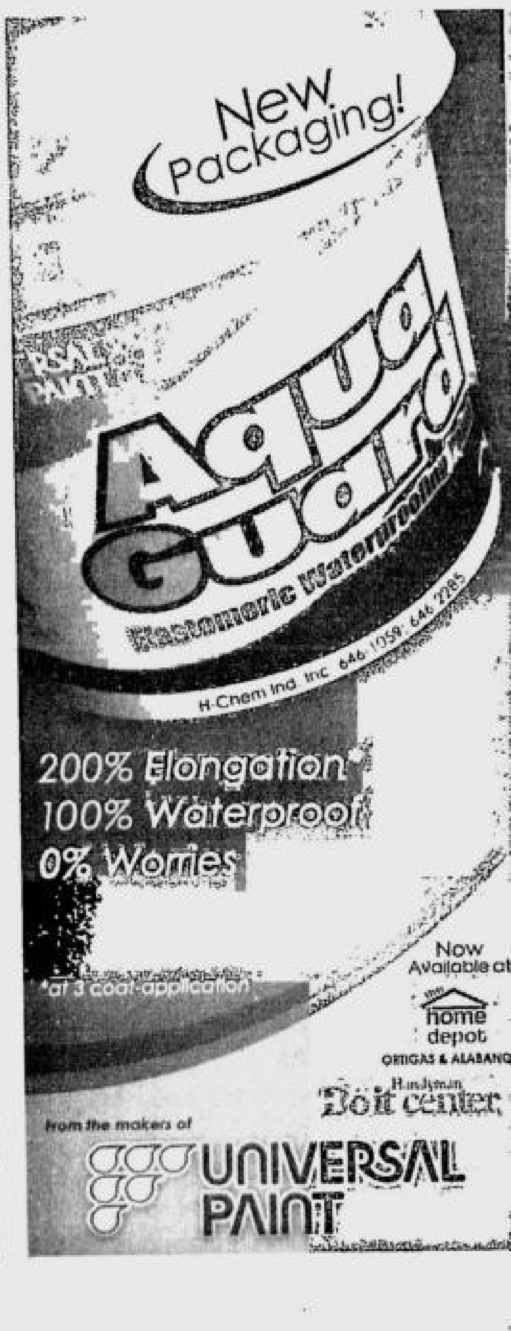


PROPERTY

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

Creating storage spaces

LIVING ARCHITECTURE

Marcos de Guzman Jr.

A PERENNIAL PROBLEM FOR EVERY homeowner is storage. As years go by, our personal stuff accumulates. We hate to discard some things due to sentimental reasons. We are so attached to other things even though a lot of times we do not really need them.

Knowing full well that one man's garbage is another man's treasure, you have a couple of practical options. One solution is to sort out the things you no longer use and give them away. Heaven will bless you for your generosity, perhaps with a wonderful feeling of contentment. Another option is to hold a garage sale and earn a few bucks for your junk. However, I can say from experience that this may not be a completely fulfilling endeavor. You could feel slighted that the things you own are appraised much lower than you expected. Just look at it this way: these old items are like barnacles at the bottom of the boat; the more you have, the slower you go.

After that's done, I'm pretty sure you will still have a lot of things left at home to store. Now, for those who just can't part with their possessions or for those with many interesting activities that require so much stuff, creating storage spaces must be practiced like an art.

Storage is one of the most important factors to consider even when planning a house and oftentimes the most neglected. The sizes of the storage areas are based on need, but more important is the type of storage area required. When building or renovating, these requirements must be factored in at once and not treated as an afterthought.

Configuration

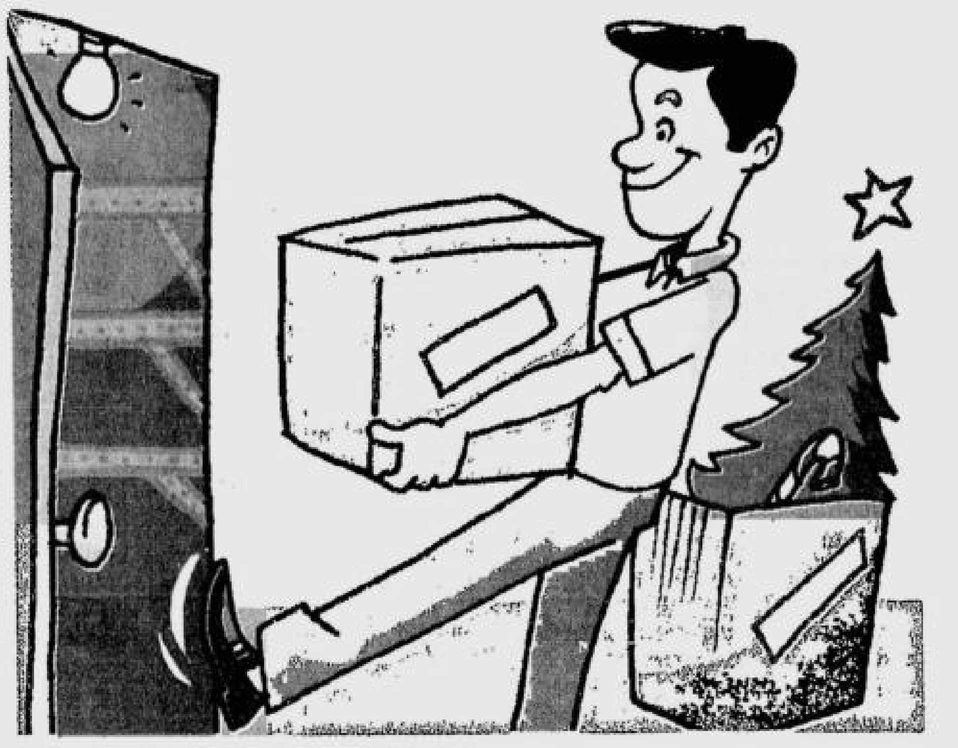
Configuration is very important. Avoid making storage rooms long and narrow; stuff at the back is likely to be forgotten. Choose to have 30- to 45-cm wide shelving on as many available walls as possible, with a walking space of around 90 centimeters. Having shelves of varied clearances is preferable to just having standard clearances; adjustable shelves are even better. There are a lot of very clever closet organizers available in the market, but these can also be constructed by a skilled carpenter.

The type, position and swing of the door are vital too. Doors must be wide enough to enable carrying in bulky items. Doors that swing outward allow for more space inside the room. Doors positioned too close to a wall forego shelf space on that wall.

Proper lighting and ventilation is another important factor. The room must be adequately lit and may be provided with an automatic ball switch, which enables the light to turn on automatically when you open the door and shuts off automatically when you close it. Fortunately, this even costs less than a regular switch. More often than not, these rooms are located where there is no opportunity to put windows, so an exhaust fan is important, the control switch for which may be connected with the lights.

Several small storage areas

It is better to have several small storage areas instead of having just one big one. The main reason for this is accessibility. A linen closet, for example, should be found near the bedroom or bathroom for easy access to beddings and towels. Comforters and pillows usually take up a lot of space but there are several gadgets available for compressing them to a fraction of their size.



Garden tools must obviously be within reach from outside the house, perhaps in an outdoor closet or shelves. This is where you put tools, hoses, fertilizers and insecticides. It should not be the same place to put your pets' supplies, as they might get contaminated.

General garage storage is also important. This is where you can stock car spare parts, cleaning agents, and lubricants. Here, you can likewise store things needed for home maintenance like spare light bulbs and water-based paints. Now, where do you store flammable items? **You don't!**

Inside the home, you can install closets or racks for shoes, clothes, gifts, toys, rain gear and umbrellas, suitcases and bulky coats, dishes, etc. The trick is to organize them first, then store like things together. Small spaces may be found below stairways, above big appliances (like washing machines), under furniture (like beds), along hallways, in attics, among others. Hobby closets for sports equipment may be a necessity for you. Motorcycle apparel, dive equipment, cycling or golf paraphernalia occupy considerable space and must be planned carefully. Storage space for books must be easily accessible and well-lit.

Christmas or Halloween decor may be placed in areas that are not easily accessible, but should be free from moisture, such as an attic or the crawl space above the ceiling.

The pantry should be able to accommodate at least a week's supply of foodstuff. Rice and water jugs, among others, require a lot more space and should be situated close to the kitchen. When planning for storage, do not forget to allocate space for garbage, empty bottles and other recyclables. The more often you can clear the latter space, the better.

The issue of creating storage space is a two-edged blade. There is an art to finding sufficient storage space and a skill to keeping it clutter-free.

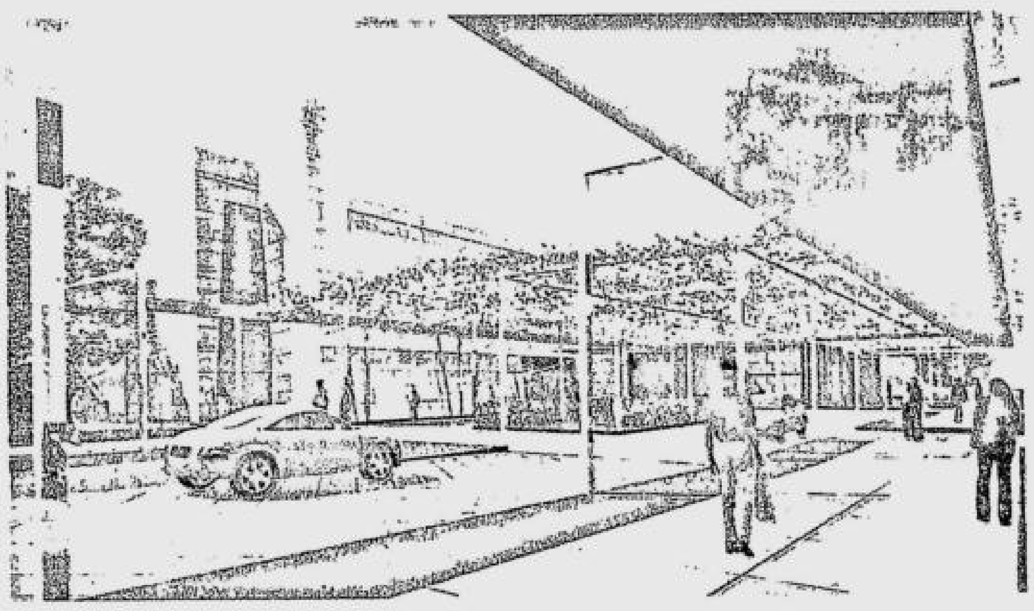
Get world-class neighbors at McKinley Hill

GLOBALIZATION HAS DAWNED UPON US the past decade. Everything—from schooling to the design of products and the promotion of services—aspires to be world-class. It's no wonder, then, that there is one neighborhood that aspires to be not only world-class in terms of architecture, but has also collaborated with institutions to make it a small global village in itself. An ambitious project like this can only come from property giant Megaworld Corp.

That neighborhood is no other than the picturesque 50-hectare McKinley Hill in Fort Bonifacio. McKinley Hill Village, dubbed "The most beautiful village in Metro Manila," features distinctly opulent Mediterranean homes that bear distinctive Portuguese, Spanish, Italian and Floridian influences. With the site's rolling hills, verdant landscape, magnificent views of Laguna Lake and fresh breezes, this is as close as we'll get to living in a setting similar to the Mediterranean's shores.

At another hilly section of this new township will rise a village that was inspired by Italy's most beautiful region. Aptly named McKinley Hill Tuscany Private Estate, it features seven clusters of rustic residential condominium buildings with varying heights. The best ideals of Italy will be replicated for the enjoyment of residents: pizzerias at the ground floor commercial section, an exclusive winery at the main clubhouse, and even villas on top of a bridge—just like in the historic city of Florence.

THE NEW British Embassy will rise at the McKinley Hill entrance facing C5.



5 institutions

From your picture windows at McKinley Hill Tuscany Private Estate, you will get to appreciate the global character of this new township. Classes are now open at the new Chinese International School Manila. Meanwhile, hotel and culinary learning institution Enderun Colleges will open its campus this November, whereas the Korean International School is set to open in the next few years. As well, the new British Embassy is now under construction, while the Korean Embassy is now deep into the planning stages of its new facility.

"These five institutions combined definitely make McKinley Hill one of the most prestigious new addresses in Metro Manila. They bring an added sense of security and pride among our future residents," Megaworld FVP Noli Hernandez remarked.

As a modern township, McKinley Hill also boasts of emerging business and commercial districts. The 14-hectare McKinley Hill Cyberpark will host third-generation business process outsourcing (BPO) office buildings. In here, international-caliber BPO firms will further drive the service sector's growth as they fulfill the business needs of their large global clients.

New mall

Just a few steps from the cyberpark will rise The Venetian, a new mall which recreates the historic architecture and canals of Venice in the country. "This new mall, which is also now under construction, will provide a new shopping and leisurely experience for our residents. Of course, it promises a romantic gondola ride along The Grand Canal," Hernandez promised.

With all these projects in place, residents will get to taste the benefits of the Live-Work-Play-Learn credo of McKinley Hill, according to Hernandez. "As a self-sustaining community, our privileged residents don't really have to go out of the community to enjoy the finest things in life. Everything they need is a few minutes' walk or ride away. That's one of the benefits of living in a world-class village like McKinley Hill," he noted.

If you foresee yourself and your family living in a world-class township, better check out McKinley Hill soon. Please call 815-1888 or check out www.megaworldcorp.com for more details.

CLASSES have started this fall at the Chinese International School Manila.

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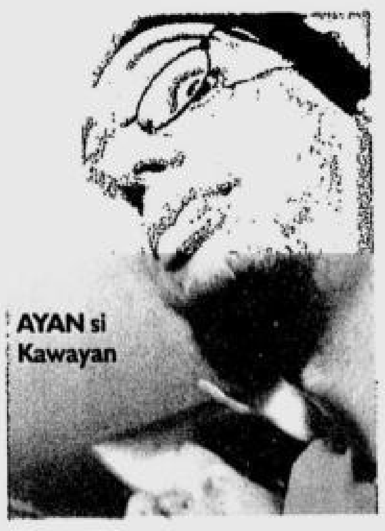
PEEP OF THE WEEK. Tongue and chick

LEON heart Karla

GRIFFIN-DOR HOUSE. Amanda Griffin



AYAN si Kawayan

PEEPS

It's a wrap!

Photos by Andy Maluche

Ulterior Motive: *Rogue magazine's September issue Wrap Party*
Crime Scene: *Nuvo, Greenbelt 2*
Release Date: *Sept. 4, 2007*

ART OF THE MATTER. Miguel Mari

GATEKEEPERS. Aslie Aslanian and Triccia David

SURF'S UP! Abe Tolentino and Noelle Hilario

ROCK AND ROGUE. Karl Roy

SUPERMODEL DIVA FOREVER. Angelo Villanueva

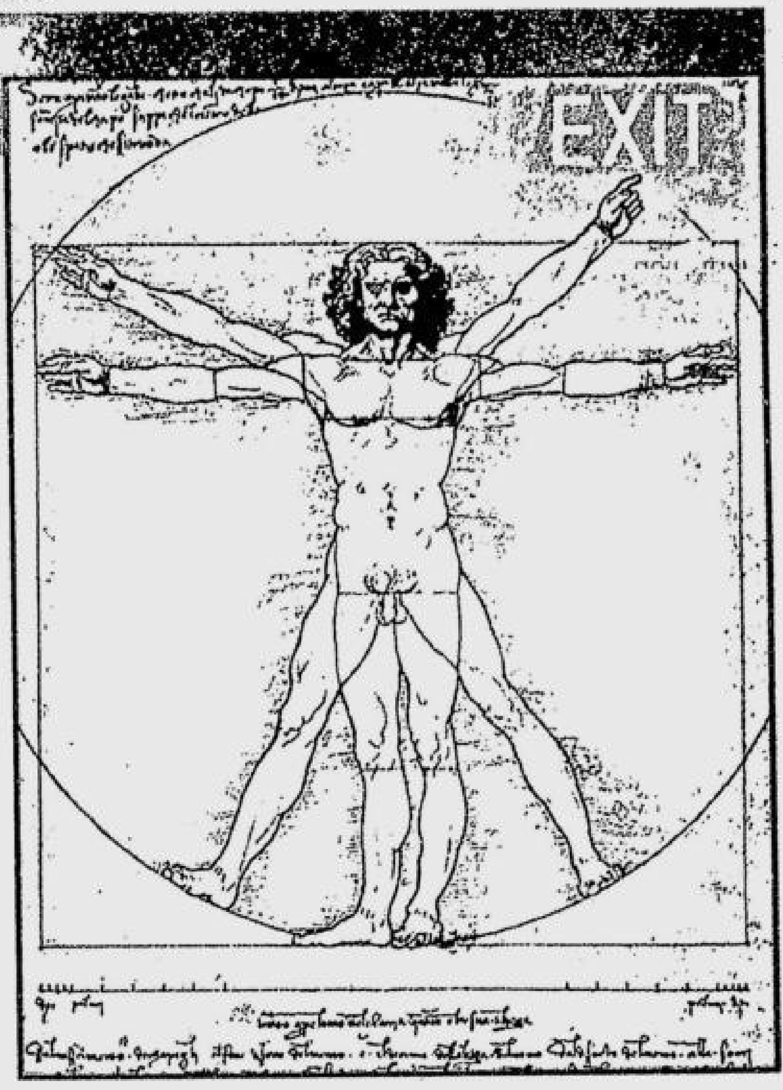
Fly with Super to Boracay!

WHEN WE SAY FLY WITH SUPER, WE mean that we'll take you on a weekly crazy and exciting trip with our consistently packed pages. But sometimes, we also mean we'll really take you to beautiful places where you can create your own Super adventures.

This week, we are giving you the chance to fly to Boracay for a four-day vacation. All you have to do is send your own Mad Scan (check out pages C4 and C5) to super@inquirer.com.ph along with your name, age, school/office and contact info. The owner of our favorite scan will win a three-night, four-day stay for two at The Sun Village Central, a beautiful resort located between Stations 1 and 2, near D' Mall, airfare for two via Seair, the airline behind the comfortable 35-minute flights to Bora and welcome drinks.

Roundabout and Out

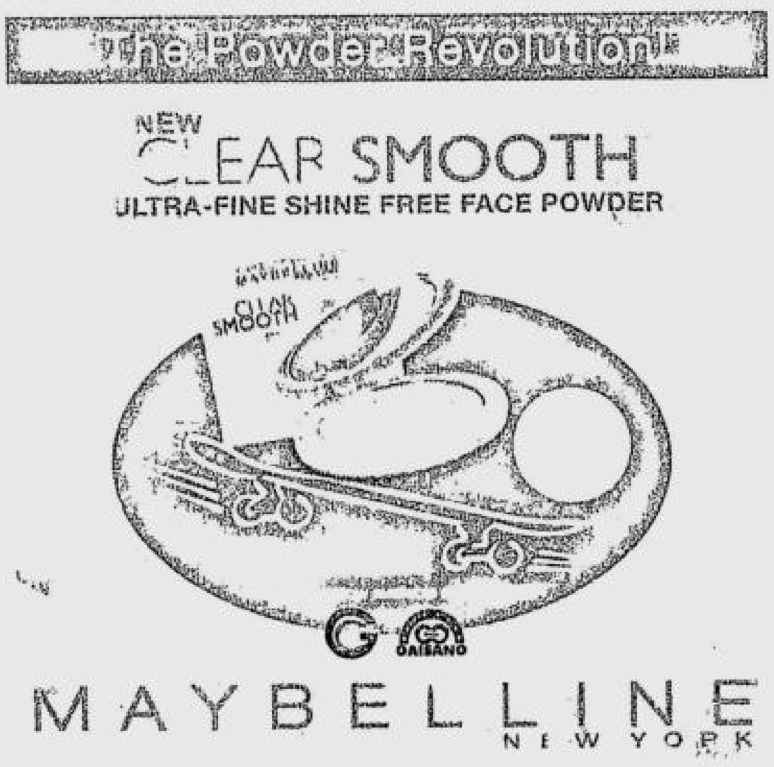
By Katrina A. Holigores



LOGISTICS HAS never been a strong point for me. Getting lost in my own backyard or anyone's backyard combined with a rather short term memory for names of places and streets is something I've learned to live with. Suffice to say finding my way from A to B is always an adventure. This week I find myself with a couple of friends on a road trip around Italy, this sounds (and is) an absolute joyride, with the exception of me having to take my shift in driving. I can and do drive back in Manila although I can't say I'm the most patient and coolheaded person on the road. I feel constantly challenged by having to avoid all forms of public transportation, private transportation and not to mention public and private citizens who feel they are the only ones who have a right to be there. Driving abroad though is not necessarily any easier. The rules (although in general depicted in international symbols) vary and it doesn't help when you're trying to find parking and can't understand what the signs mean. Read: parking directly in front of a tow away or EU 500 fine zone.

A couple of days ago I found myself snaking my way through the narrow streets of a typical Italian town which wasn't built for anything wider than a horse. The feeling of actually maneuvering my way (both successfully, and unfortunately also unsuccessfully) through eye of a needle looking arches and maniacally parked cars raised my heartbeat a couple of times. Out on the wide open road the heartbeat raising aspect was in the form of roundabouts, (or a rotonda) which, if not entered into with confidence can cause a whole bout of insecurities. Think about it, you enter (literally) into a circular speedway of choices. Now, if you are not alert enough, you forget that someone else (or many someone elses) is bearing down on you from your left which could end up in disaster. If you are not sure of where to go and doubt yourself for a second, you miss the proper exit, and have to go around again with your tail between your legs as other cars, who know where they're going zip by you without any hesitation.

But roundabouts are also a confidence builder, because at some point, you have to take charge and after taking a deep, deep breath choose your way out of there. It's akin to the very moment (enter personal epiphany) that you get behind the wheel of your own life and decide that you do want to reach point A—or realize what point A actually is. Then, with that determination (taking into consideration that you will get a little sidetracked,) you go for it, just don't be afraid to slow down every now and then to get your bearings. When driving it helps to be in a car with a GPS and a bunch of people who are understanding enough to know that even someone like Michael Schumacher hit a few speed bumps in his own career. In life expect to get pulled over a couple of times, remember to get tuned up regularly, and know with absolute certainty that there is an exit point to get to where you want to be on any roundabout you find yourself revolving. Go ahead and program your life's GPS to be able to cruise through some of the most scenic routes that will make it the ride of a lifetime.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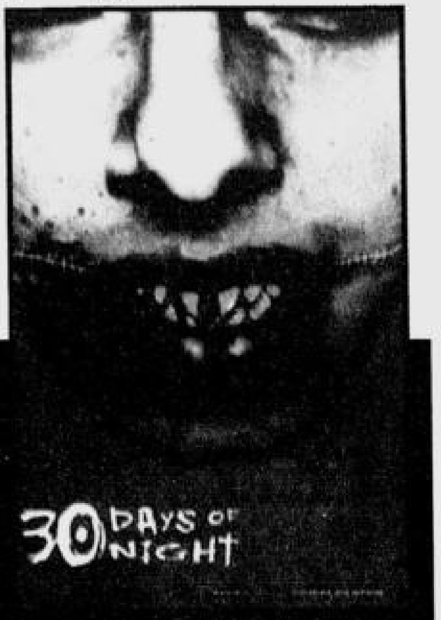

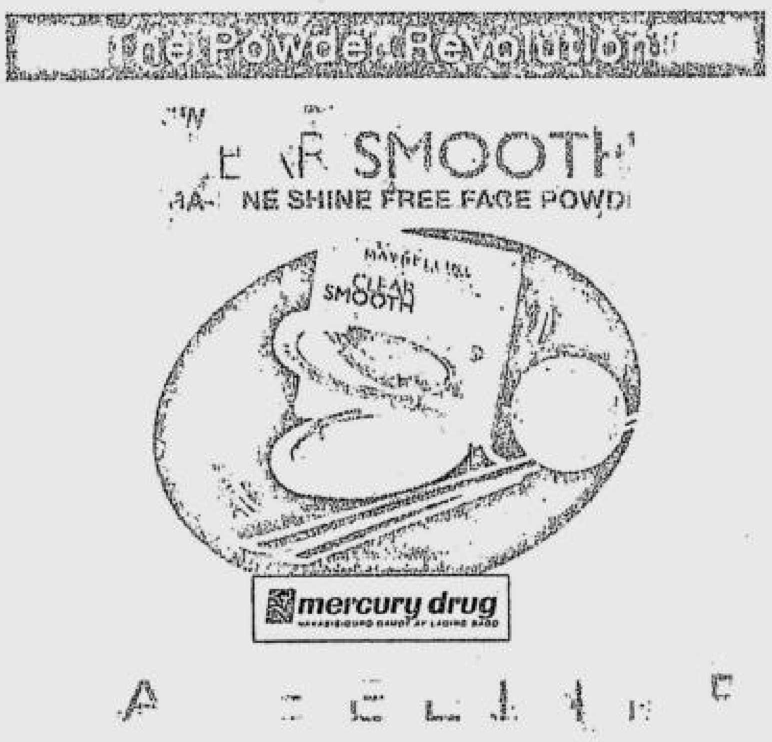
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WHY READ THE BOOK first before it hits the big screen? To impress your movie date with your unabashed arrogance, of course! There is much ado about being literary savvy, especially when you get to declare unperturbed at the right moment "(yawn), the book's soooo much better." Then again, if you're thinking of taming "Beowulf" before gawking at Angelina Jolie in the theaters, then we'll spare you the trouble and the endless diphthongs—just go to Wikipedia.

He's bringing scary back!

For the brave ones who like getting their regular horror fix, pick up the graphic novel series "30 Days of Night" by Steve Niles before it hits the movie screens this December. The story takes place in Barrow, Alaska, a small town where the sun sets for 30 days, conditions ideal for vampires to feed without being harmed by lethal sunlight.

Here's even better news. The artist behind the successful horror series, Ben Templesmith, is coming to Manila! Ben's artistic style brought a whole new dimension to modern horror and vampire looks in comics. Templesmith will be flying in from his hometown of Perth, Australia, to give a series of art workshops and book signings in schools and at Fully Booked this coming October.

NOW for the best news yet. Send your original vampire artwork to **super@inquirer.com.ph** with the subject "30 Days Vampire Art Contest" and the best one will win a free graphic novel of "30 Days of Night" from Fully Booked. The selected artwork will appear in the upcoming October issues of Super with proper cred of course!

Guilt trippy

Ever did something so bad when you were a kid and spent the rest of your life trying to make up for it? Little Briony Tallis did, one hot summer day in 1935, irrevocably changing the lives of her older sister Cecilia and her lover Robbie Turner. (Cecilia is played by Kiera Knightley, and Robbie is James McAvoy in the movie. Vanessa Redgrave plays the older Briony.) Make sure you've got a box of Kleenex on hand in the last few pages for this modern classic by Ewan McEwan, which was shortlisted for the 2001 Booker Prize for fiction.

Are you guilty about something? Be brave enough to write us about it and win a free copy of "Atonement"! Send your confession to **super@inquirer.com.ph** with the subject heading, "My Atonement." The best confession gets published on these pages, and wins a free copy of "Atonement" from Fully Booked.

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See posters for details.

CHERIE GIL

Actress, not a second rate, trying hard copycat

JED QUIAMBAO

Marketing officer by day, a mommy to a cute doggie by night

MARCO

DJ for Mellow 94.7 and fun seeker

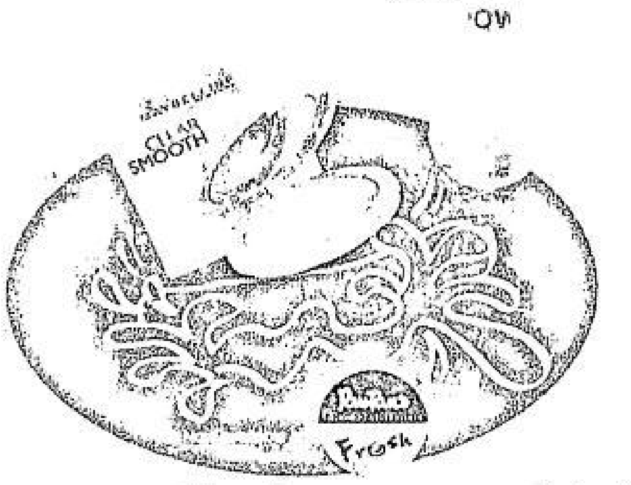
FRANCIS GA

Architect slash g

No ID required

Russian geniuses Timur A
Internet. Faceyourpockets
week, Super asked all kind
around with them. The sca
something we wouldn't do

The Powder Revolution



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The most important meal of the day just got more heart-friendly! Start the day right with the new Ensure Heart Healthy Breakfast Pack. The idea behind the Heart Healthy Breakfast duo is to help good take care of your heart because it combines one sachet of Ensure and one sachet of Quaker Oats natural soluble fiber. Ensure, an adult nutritional drink highly recommended by doctors, has low cholesterol and is rich with fiber and antioxidants. Quaker Oats, on the other hand, has 100% natural soluble fiber to help reduce blood cholesterol levels and lessens the risk of heart disease.

BIBAY CORDERO

Special Ed teacher, S.P.I.T. actor

NOEL IZRAEL LACSON

Student nurse

THEA NAPA

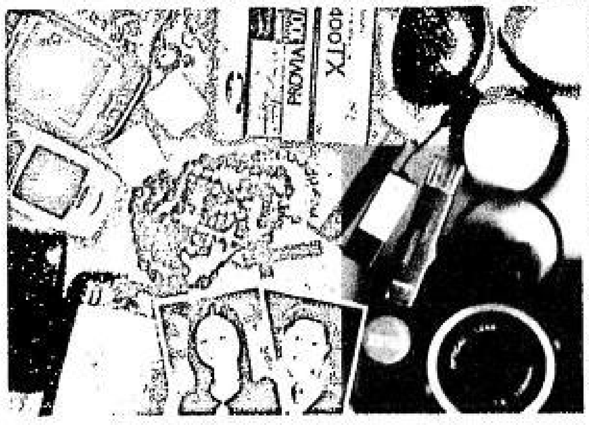
Bipolar Acid Eating Interior Design student

PAM PASTOR

Super editor, pimp, beer drinker, queen of klutziness

GANG BADOY

Media practitioner



ARWIN AYUSA

Future actuary and parttime juggler

ERIC BUYCO

Videographer

HAPPY DAV

Time travele
Raja Yoga new
and Let's
ambassad

Something exclusive is coming your way in Inquirer Sunday Lifestyle

Don't miss the September 16 issue of the Inquirer

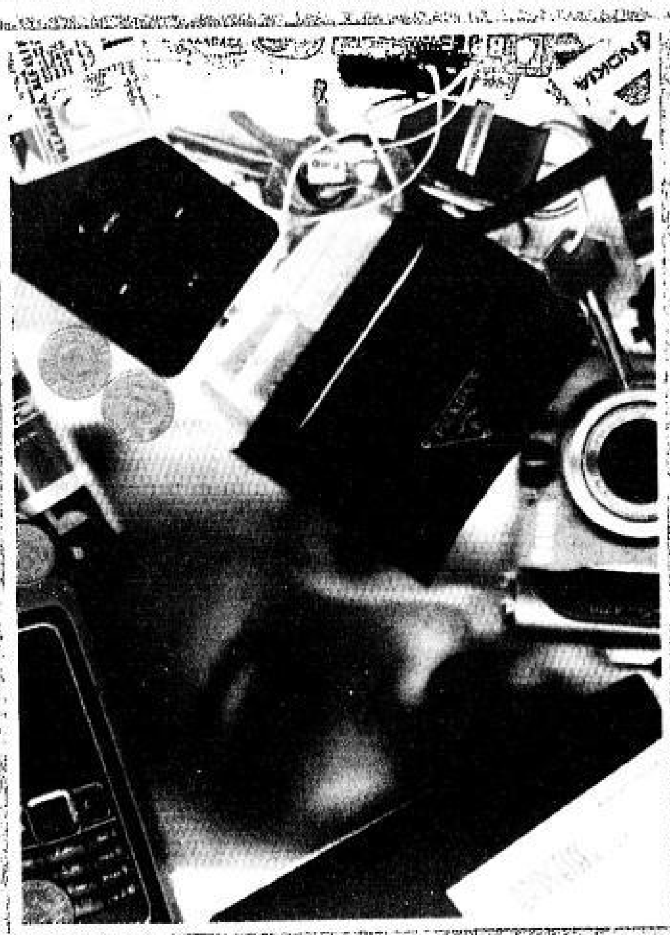
INQUIRER

RCAN

itarist

FRANCINE PRIETO

Model, actress



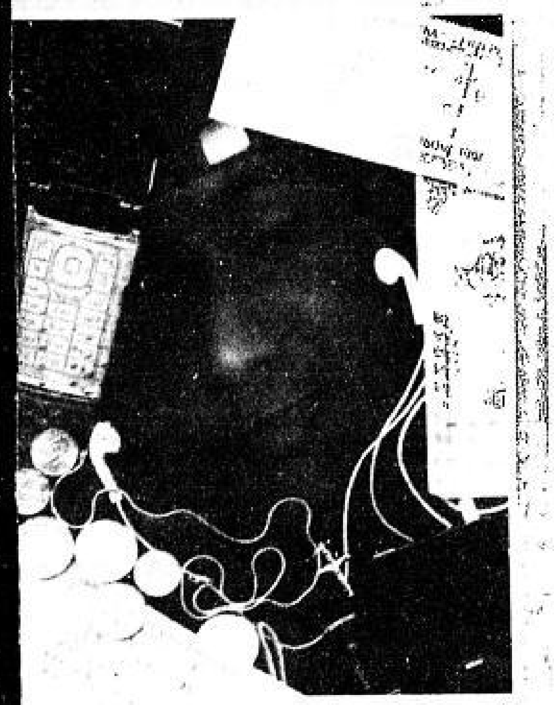
ALEXEI VILLARAZA

Publicist

JILL LEJANO

Lomographer

metov and Yulia Yakushova have thought of yet another big thrill for the voyeurs and exhibitionists of the
om is slowly gaining popularity as the online equivalent of digging through people's pockets—and bags. Inspired by Timur and Yulia, this
of people—actresses, designers, photographers, corporate warriors, artists—to spill their guts by showing us what they always carry
are more than just a kick for the nosy, they reveal priorities, passions and people's psyche. And because we wouldn't ask anyone to do
e bent over our scanners and faced our own pockets too. Just call us the Mad Scanners. And the best part is we're only getting started.



GERARD MARCELO

Cafa Man

LIEZEL DEL ROSARIO

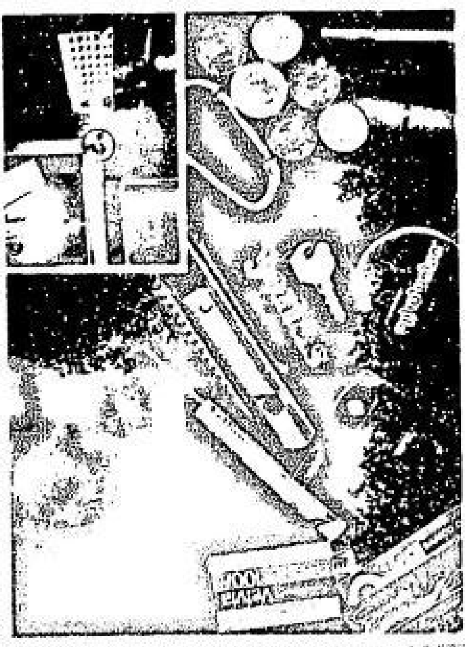
Kikay artist

TALS DIAZ

Super columnist,
Word nerd

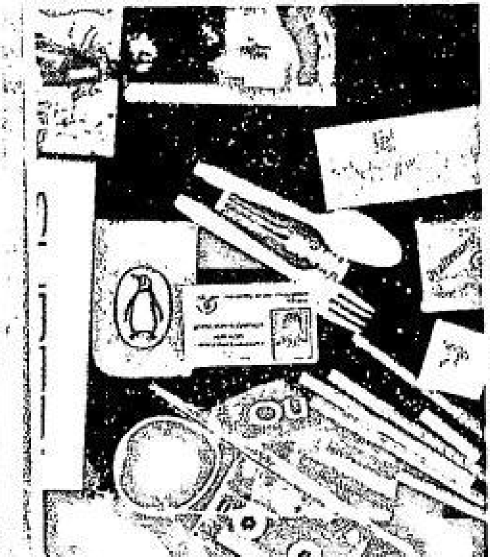
TESSA PRIETO-VALDES

Celebrity Duets' singing
interior designer



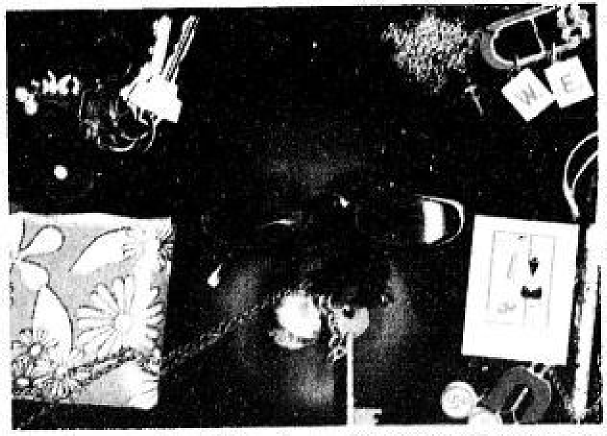
JONAS ASISTIO

Art director and
lomographer



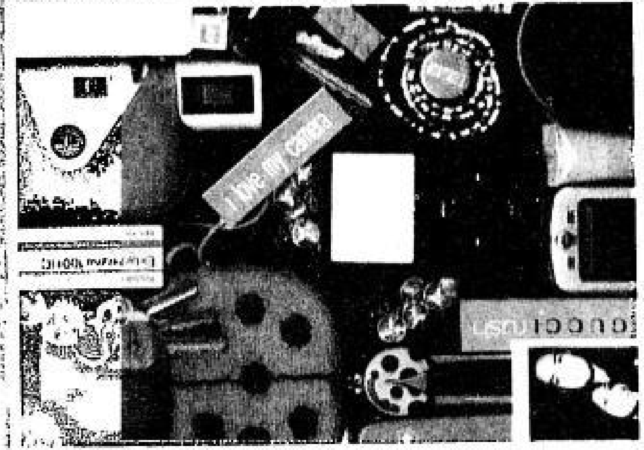
JAMES GABRILLO

Super columnist,
thunder cat



IRENE PINEDA

Artist, designer



MELANIE VICENTE

Work Force analyst

AARON AYUSA

Dreamer

PAOLO REYES

Super columnist, Rogue
specialist

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SPIT, don't squeeze.

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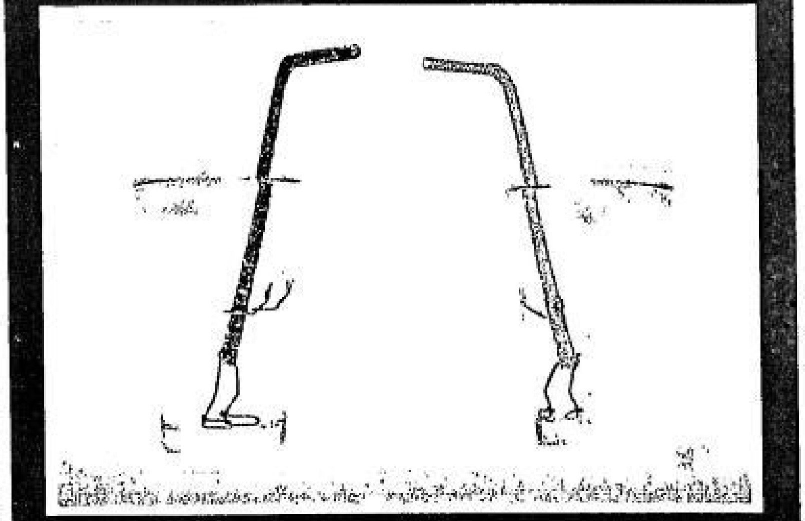
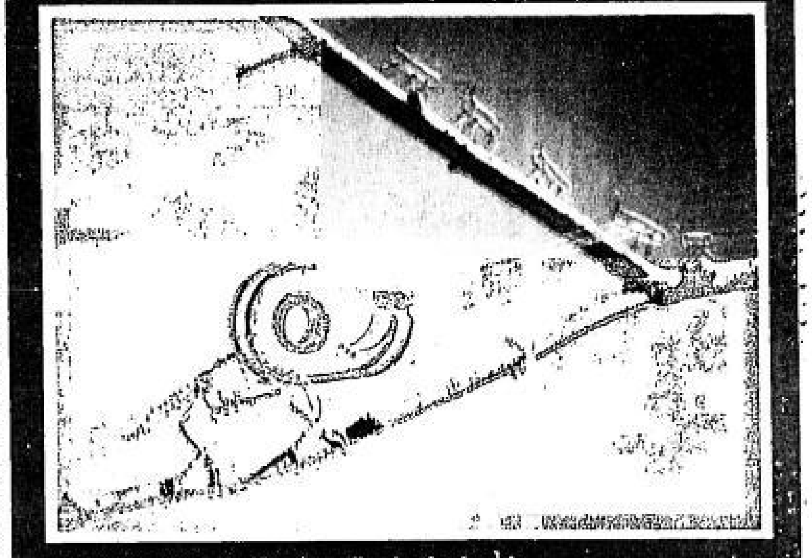
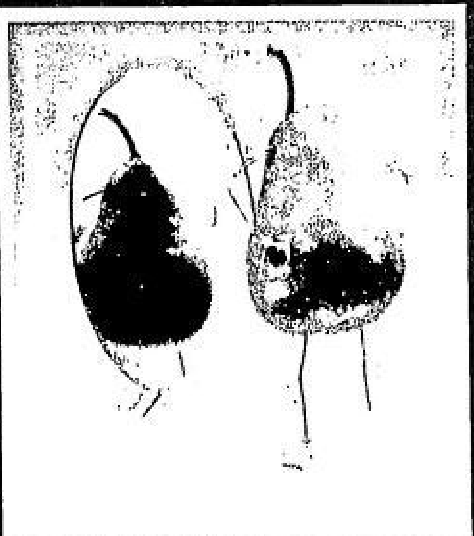


LOVE sucks.

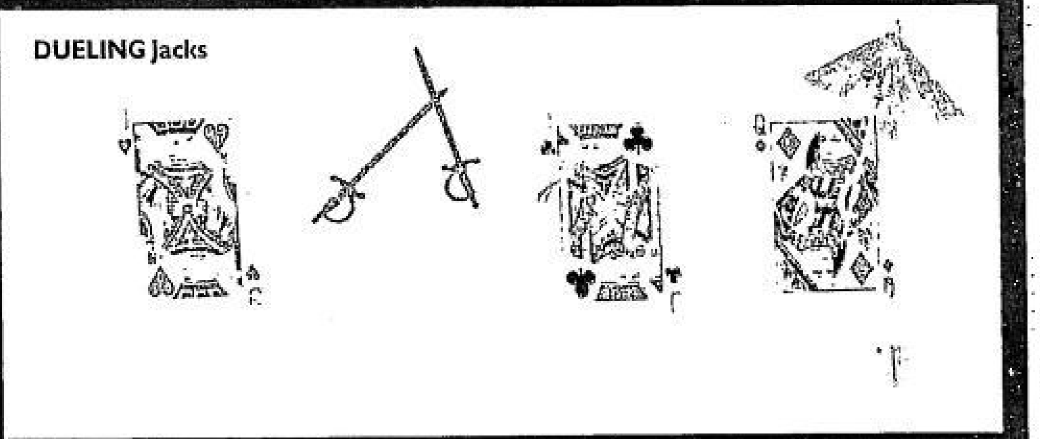
BYE BYE birdie



THE NATURE of office supplies in the jungle



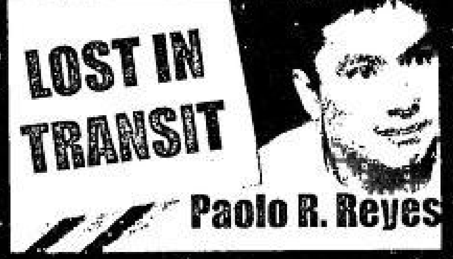
DISTORTED pear-fection



DUELING Jacks

Wired Science

With a little help from ordinary tools and everyday objects, Terry Border brings his bizarre sculptures of bent wire to life



LOST IN TRANSIT

Paolo R. Reyes

IF PIXAR BLOCKBUSTER "Toy Story" made you think twice about the inanimate life of your He-Man, G.I. Joe, and Voltron figurines, then an imaginative little blog will make you question the seemingly lifeless objects that lurk within your fridge, office drawer, and kitchen cabinets.

Wedged somewhere between the worlds of weird hobbies and goatee-stoking high art is Bent Objects (bentobjects.blogspot.com), a site that exhibits funky, satirical objects d'art by an eccentric American artist named Terry Border.

Using an ample supply of metal wires, trusty pliers, and everyday household products (be it a box of Trojan condoms, a Campbell's soup can, or a slice of Gardenia bread), Border—who holds Bachelor of Science degree in Fine Art Photography—crafts together a whimsical line of sculptures worthy of a curious second look, and a good laugh.

Born to be wired

"I'm the kind of person who laughs at the absurdities of life, which there are many," he declares in the About Me page of his decidedly spartan website. "After four decades on Planet Earth, I feel I've finally found a way to bring into existence all of my crazy thoughts and ideas."

Bent Objects is essentially a free venue for Border to showcase "the things he makes and the images he takes," majority of which are well-composed photographs of the quirky, three-dimensional wire pieces he cobbles together in the garage of his Indianapolis home.

After working as a commercial photographer for several years, he started to explore wire sculpture as a weekend hobby. But in a matter of months, he already began selling small mobiles (hanging sculptures) in art galleries around Indiana.

"Whether it's with wire, aluminum bars, brass, or whatever—most of my work is simply me drawing by bending metal," he says.

Surprisingly, the 42-year-old artist makes no attempt to conceal his materials and techniques from readers. (In fact, he even published a "Quickie Wire How-To" last June for those interested in his unorthodox art form.)

"These are not cold, precise machine shop products," he says. "I rarely even make any real measurements. Although I have an idea where I'm going with a piece, I always leave plenty of latitude to explore and play."

Walk on the wired side

A few months after it was launched in September 2006, Border's online exhibition space has become a byword in the blogosphere. The site has been raking in enough links and hits that San Francisco-based web publishing company, Blogger, even included it in their hotly-contested "Blogs of Note" list.

It even spawned another blog, Really Bent (reallybent.blogspot.com)—the more explicit, black-sheep sibling of Bent Objects.

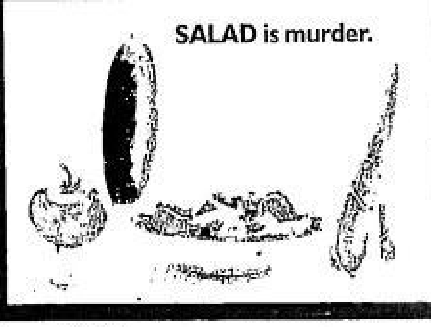
After struggling to find a language where he could express his offbeat sense of humor and bizarre ideas, Border found consolation in the comical medium of bent wires.

"I enjoy taking biomorphic shapes, or perhaps some doodles out of my sketchbook, and turning them into hard (but usually animated) metal sculptures," he says. "By translating the shape of an object—a tropical plant, a foot, a Chihuahua—into a mechanical metal construction, the context is changed to make the eye stop and look a little longer."

So the next time you find yourself bored and broke and with nothing better to do, it would be wise to remember that—with a little help from your hands and a weird imagination—the ordinary can be made extraordinary in the most novel ways.

THEY know best.

HARDWARE Rex



SALAD is murder.

BREAKFAST is served

A TROJAN horse

'Although I have an idea where I'm going with a piece, I always leave plenty of latitude to explore and play'

HotWired!

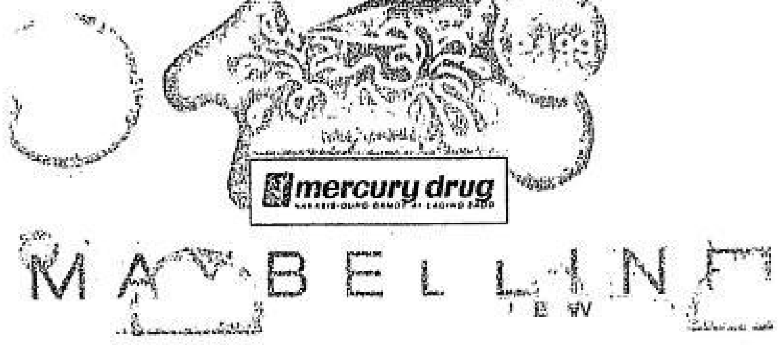
How to bend it like Terry Border

☐ "The best way to learn this material is to write with it. That's right, write! The funny thing about wire is that you can only draw as well in wire as you can with a pencil or pen. It is exactly the same in a lot of ways."

☐ "With loops placed at strategic points in your work, you can build strength and stability. These are the connecting points in the sculpture. With a couple of loops and a bend of the wire, we can roughly make a circle."

☐ "When you wrap wire, it must be wrapped tightly and consistently. This will keep your work from looking sloppy and conspicuous. It's best if you use your pliers to grab the loose end and wrap it around, because your fingers can't usually do it well enough."

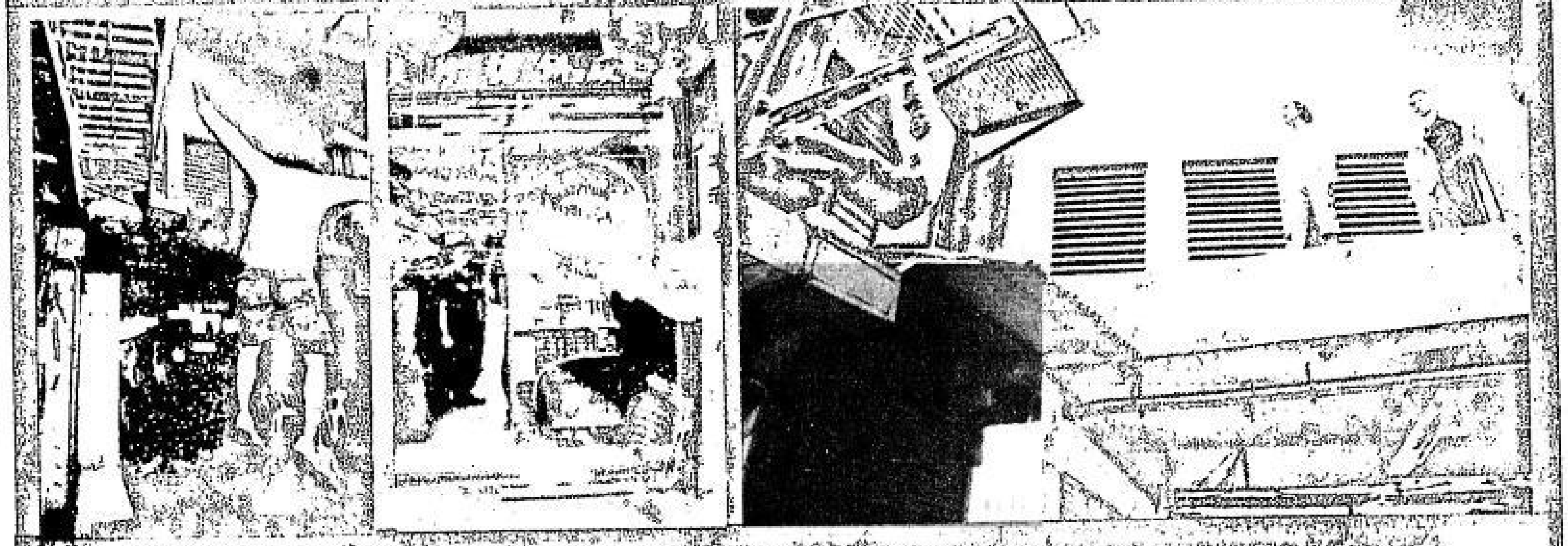
☐ "Don't be afraid to try your own thing, your own way with wire, it might be better. There are no rules here, if it works for you—go for it!"



Move on

By James Gabrillo
Photography by Andy Maluche

To go from point A to point B in the most efficient and flowing manner achievable [illegible] movement called Parkour or l'art du deplacement which means "the art of displacement."



In order to master the art one must be able to master his or her mind first.

[illegible] Parkour founder David Belle encouraged the [illegible] and [illegible] quick, creative thinking.

[illegible]

In an interview with BBC News, Belle said, "Our aim is to take our art to the world and make people understand what it is to move."

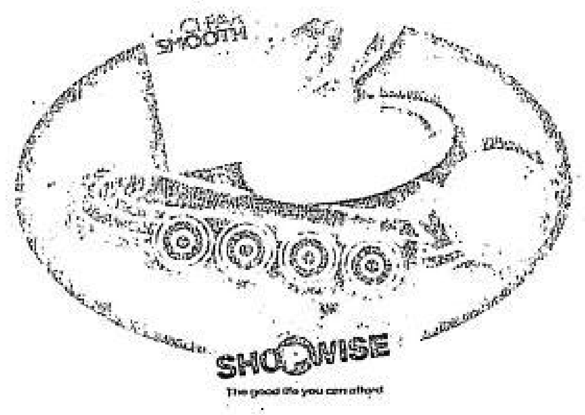
Another reason why is Parkour [illegible] demonstration of a [illegible] freedom [illegible]

It should be pointed out however that Parkour is not a sport, where constant clashing exists.

[illegible] provide [illegible] people to exhibit their boundless imagination.

In this Super shoot, we called a few pals who practice the art and discipline of Parkour to test their skills and techniques in the dizzying, tricky streets of Binondo.

[illegible]



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Super answers

CELEBRITIES are constantly bombarded with interviews. This time, Super turns the tables on them and gives them the chance to ask the question—and we want you—yes, you—to give them the answers.

Last week, Paolo Bediones wanted to know, "Who do you want to be with for the rest your life? Someoneyou love more or someone who loves you more?"

Grace Dizon, MD, said: "Paolo, let me answer that question with another question: If you love someone, does it really matter?"

This week, Priscilla Meirelles wants to know, "Where in the city can you find the most breathtaking view of Manila?"

E-mail your answers to super@inquirer.com.ph with the subject heading 'super answers.' Your Super answer will be printed next week.

Nyoy Volante

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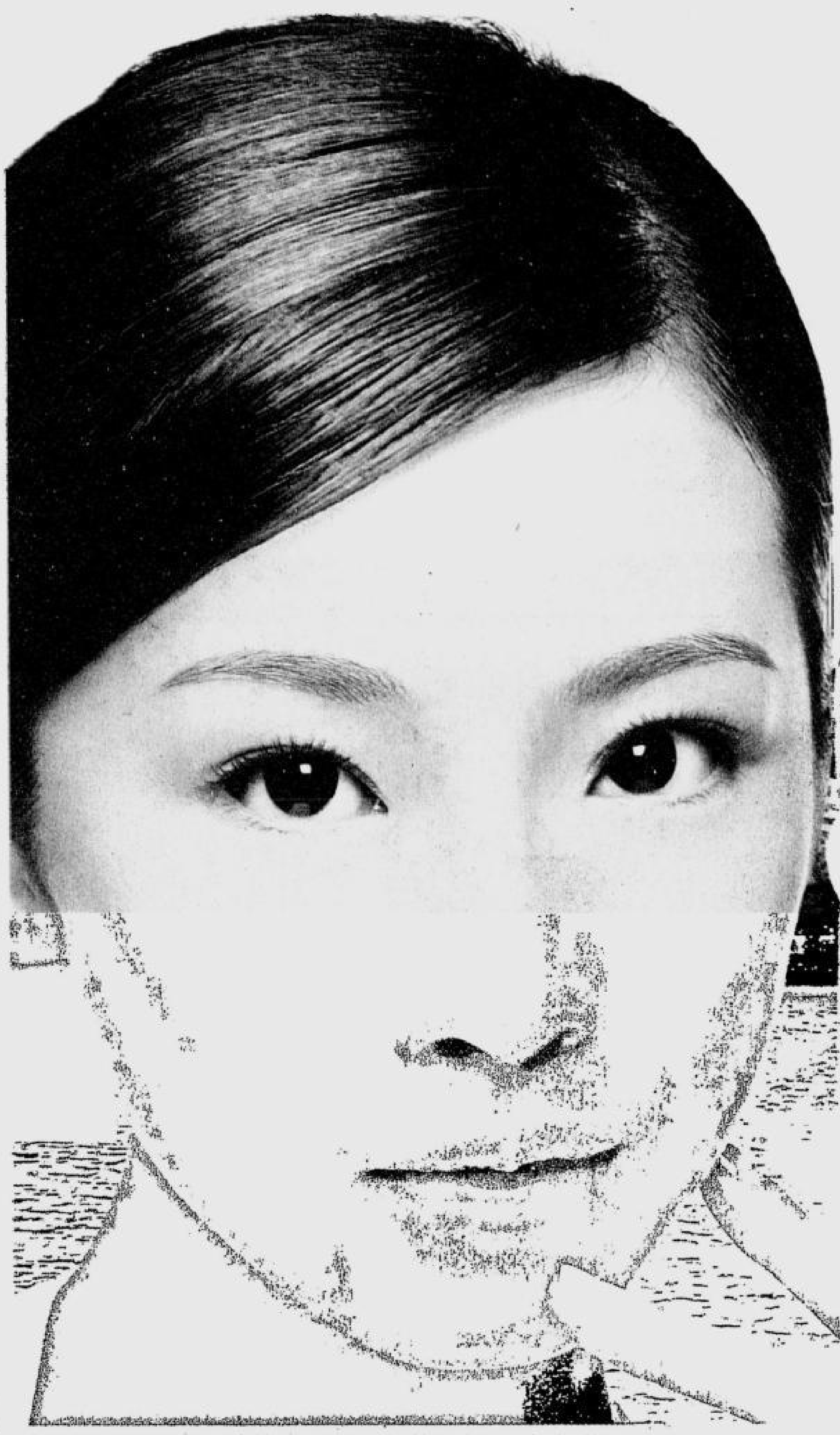

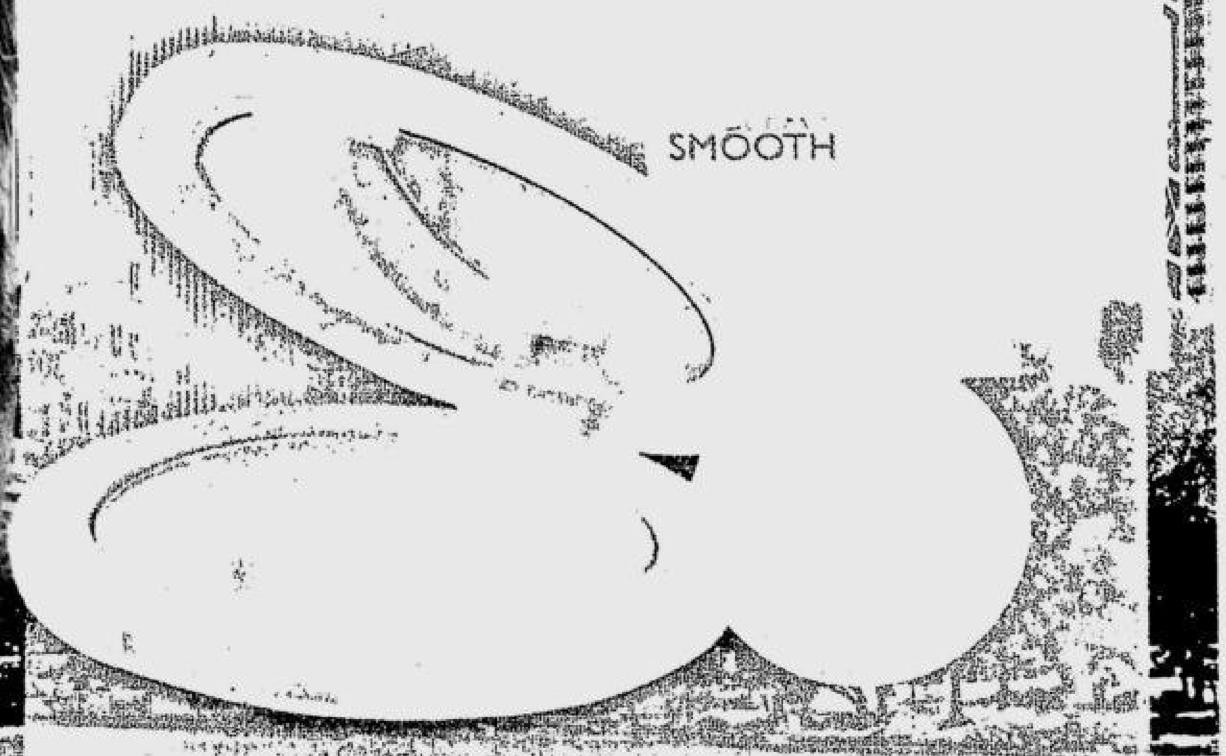

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Shangri-la Plaza Mandaluyong
Shangri-la Plaza Annex
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Muntinlupa Putatan
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Marikina Concepcion
Marikina Dela Paz
Marikina Parang

NAVOTAS
Navotas Agora

MALABON
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Taguig Gen. Luna

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EDSA Trinoma Mall Level M1
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Novaliches Lagro
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Bacoor - Bahayang
Bacoor - Molino
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Binangonan - Pag-Asa
Binan - Mabini
Binan - Petemo
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Cainta Ortigas Extension
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Edsa-Cainta - Pasig
Hagonoy - Poblacion
Imus - Nueno
Kawit - Binakayan
Meycauayan - Highway
Mandaluyong - Pinatubo
Navotas - Poblacion
Parañaque - BF Homes
Qplaza - Cainta
Pasig - Kapitolyo
Robinsons - Dasmarinas
Robinsons - Imus
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Tanza - Poblacion
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Guadalupe
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Meycauayan - Malhacan
Meycauayan - McArthur Highway
Meycauayan - Sto. Niño
Los Banos - College
Siniloan - Rector
Malolos - McArthur Highway
San Miguel - Poblacion
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Olivarez Plaza - Biñan
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Prestunes Commercial Bulacan
Pure Gold - E. Rodriguez
Sta. Maria - Poblacion
Nagcarlan - Fernandez
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Tagaytay - Aguinaldo Highway
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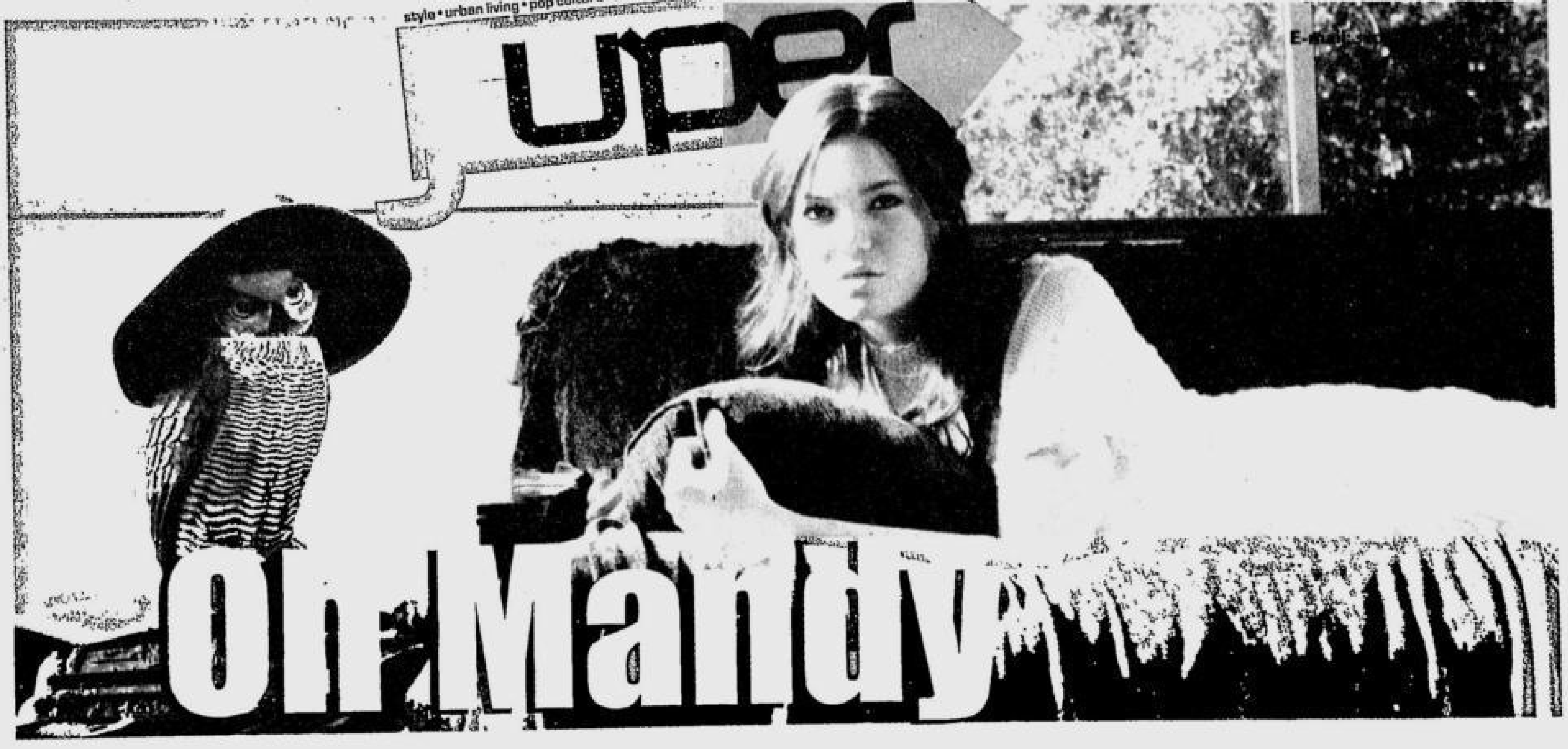
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Super

Oh Mandy

Mandy Moore gave Super some love during the Washington DC stop of her US tour and talked about her new album Wild Hope and the other things that are rocking her world

By Pam Pastor

"WILD HOPE" ISN'T Mandy Moore's first album—far from it—but on some levels, it feels like one. After all, the now 23-year-old Mandy makes her songwriting debut in this record—and she does it with panache, collaborating with a number of artists including Rachael Yamagata, The Weepies and Lori McKenna. "I really haven't had the personal involvement on anything in the past, not like I do with this one."

The album, which was recorded at Allaire Studios in Woodstock, New York, was produced by John Alagia who has worked with John Mayer, Dave Matthews and Liz Phair. "Wild Hope" has been referred to as a labor of love that took Mandy two years to complete.

The record bears no traces of Mandy's bubblegum pop past. In its place is an organic, folk sound and a stronger and more sophisticated voice. Not that she has misgivings about the very music that catapulted her to fame. "Teenpop was a great platform to start from. I'm not someone who regrets anything. But in those days, I was just given songs and told to go into the studio and record them. Yet, I think that as you get older, you change and so do your musical tastes. And not to have those changes reflected in the music I was so involved with was very disheartening to me."

Mandy believes her double life as a singer and actress played a part in her desire to take more control of her music. "It all became linked to the choices that I was making in movies. As an actor, you have substantial control with the films you take on: If you never want to do an action movie, you don't have to. If you don't want to do nudity, you don't have to. It's case-by-case, project-by-project. For me all this went hand-in-hand with my music. I can't go off and do a movie with Diane Keaton, Mia Farrow, Billy Crudup or Tom Wilkinson and then come back to make a record where I, as a creative matter, am absent."

The result is an album which she feels represents her well and expresses what it's like to be "a young woman figuring out life and where she fits into the scheme of things about love, relationships, and about being disappointed."

"Making this record has been the most exciting and fulfilling creative experience of my life," Mandy said. "I knew exactly what type of album I wanted to make and firmly held my ground."

There's no doubt about it, while other pop princesses have spent the past few years pretty much falling apart right before our eyes, Mandy has grown up gracefully, carving a name for herself not just in music but in film and television as well.

Mandy Moore gave Super some love during the Washington DC stop of her US tour and talked about her new album Wild Hope and the other things that are rocking her world.

When I interviewed you in Manila in 2003, you were excited about coming out with your album Coverage. How much have you changed since then?

I think I've just grown up like most young women. You find new things you gravitate to and hopefully find a comfort zone with them. Coverage was definitely the beginning to the ride toward "Wild Hope."

How would you describe this new album? What makes it different from your previous ones?

This album is me. My words and music. The recording process was different in that I had control—a lot. I was there for the entire thing rather than just being there to sing my part. This album was about putting my all into it—personally and professionally.

What's your favorite song from the album?

I think my favorite song would have to be "Wild Hope." It was definitely the most vivid memory of writing. I have to say that none of these songs really came off as difficult to write. Some of them really came into their own while recording but the chem

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Oh Mandy

From page D1

istry with all of my co-writers was really amazing.

You're currently on tour now. Where are you now and how was your last show?

I'm in Washington DC now. The last few shows have actually been the best. The audiences are really hearing about the tour and showing up with so much enthusiasm and support. This has been the funnest part of the whole project.

I know you collaborated with Rachael Yamagata for Ladies' Choice. I am a huge fan of hers and flew to Singapore to meet her. She speaks so highly of you and loves you—what was it like working with her?

Rachael is just amazing—like a sister. We instantly bonded when we first met and that song came about literally within a few hours. She just gets me and we are both so open and free when it comes to writing.

You're on tour now with Rachael and Paula Cole—what is that like?

The tour is going amazingly well. Rachael is on our bus so it's like one big happy family. Ben Lee is going to join for a few dates which I'm also really excited about.

What was working on License to Wed like?

Robin Williams is just too funny. There were many scenes where I couldn't even get through them. It was great to work with someone who is just so quick and it starts to bring out the best in you.

What has been your favorite role so far?

I think my favorite role thus far was either Hillary Faye in "Saved!" or Lucy in my most current film "Dedication."

You've done a number of collaborations—which has been your favorite so far?

I think "Ladies Choice" would have to be one of them, for sure.

Who else would you like to collaborate with?

I would love to do something with Wilco. I am just obsessed with them.

If you had to choose between acting and singing, which one would you pick?

I think I would have to choose singing. There is nothing like being onstage and getting that instant feedback that you just don't get from doing film work. I am so happy to get the best of both worlds, though.

How do you stay sane while on tour?

Good friends. Sleep. And more good friends. My band (members) are just amazing and we are like family.

Do you have plans of returning to Asia?

I am hoping to get back there before the end of this year, actually. I hope to know soon.

What's the best thing about doing what you do?

I think just the simple fact that I love doing what I do. When and if the time comes that I don't, I know I will make a change. For now, it's just awesome.

How do you psyche yourself up for a gig?

My band and I sing a lot before going onstage. It just puts me in the comfort zone and relaxes me.

What are your future plans? What are you excited about?

I want to keep touring and take this show internationally. I'm hoping this will go thru the new year. I have a few film projects I am entertaining as well.

What else can Mandy Moore fans expect?

I hope a lot more music in the near future, definitely touring and a few films in 2008. Happy to be busy!

Don't get Jodie mad

'The Brave One was a great experience but it was also terribly lonely. Sometimes with dramas that's the way it is.'

"I THINK WE ALL have these ideas that there are lines that we would never cross and people we could never be," says Jodie Foster, the star of Warner Bros.' new suspense thriller "The Brave One." The two-time Oscar-winner plays radio host Erica Bain whose life is shattered when a brutal attack leaves her badly wounded and her fiancé dead. Unable to move past the tragedy, Erica begins prowling the city streets at night to track down the men she holds responsible.

She continues, "And yet, you don't know who you would become in a certain circumstance. You might assume, intellectually, what your ethics might be, but until you are forced into a situation that challenges you, that changes you, you can't know who you would be."

In this Super! interview, Foster talks about her new movie and her unwavering passion for her craft.

How did you feel after making The Brave One?

It is a movie that I really invested in. I spent a lot of time on the script and getting it to this point. It was such a satisfying opportunity. It was a great experience but it was also terribly lonely. Sometimes with dramas that's the way it is.

Are you similar to Erica in any way?

There are some things that are similar. She is an intellectual. She is somebody who thinks about life and thinks about the world and is in some ways quite philosophical. She is not just an unconscious beast. So, I think that is similar to me. And I do tend to choose roles that are the solitary journeys, somebody who has this path on their own and they have lost their husband or don't have parents. I am usually the central person, and I think that is a part of me, too—that my creative spirit is quite solitary. But other than that, I don't know.

"I TEND to choose roles that are the solitary journeys."

How far would Jodie go to stand up for herself?

You don't know, do you? I am not a particularly brave person. I am in my work but I don't know that I am in my life. I don't know if I am really brave. I have no temper. I don't get mad. If I am mad, I get really articulate. I am very good at telling somebody off, like suddenly I find these words in every language.

How do you prepare to play a role for a character that is a victim of crime?

I looked a lot at post-traumatic stress syndrome. I read a lot about that, but I think that [Erica] is very different. She is the character that didn't get help. She needed to get help and she didn't get help. I walked a lot—like crazy, crazy amounts of walking, like thousands of miles everywhere in Manhattan. Some of it was being completely isolated and [wearing] headphones. It is kind of a meditational experience.

"I DON'T know if I am really brave. I have no temper. I don't get mad."

Do you have an idea of what you want the audience to draw from the film?

For me, this is a very sophisticated film that in some ways has references to the films of the 1970s, our American movies of the 1970s, films that are portraits of an antihero in some ways.

Can you relate to people who take chances like Erica does?

I can't relate to that. I have to imagine it because I play her. Yes I relate to her because I can relate to her pain and her powerlessness and to her psychology, her descent into madness but I am a by-the-book person.

Do you think there are parallels between this film and "Taxi Driver?"

I think it is a great comparison. "Taxi Driver" is a wonderful movie and it is a great American classic. It was 25 years ago and New York is a completely different place now. First of all, Erica is an entirely different character from Travis Bickle. Not only is she female, which totally changes her experience, but she is conscious. She is intelligent and she is philosophical, and she knows what is happening. Travis is completely unconscious and totally unaware. He reacts on his emotions and he doesn't know why. He has a perspective on the world that is entirely subjective. He has no higher side that is looking down on his experiences, so that makes it a completely different movie. It has a different feeling to it too. Also, the New York of the 1970s was directly after Vietnam. His character is also sort of Vietnam vet etc. This is New York after 9/11. It is the safest big city in the world; it is not like it was in the 70s. When I shot Taxi Driver in the '70s we shot it on 13th and 3rd with all the child prostitutes, today you can't get an apartment there for under 4 million dollars! I mean, that is like a fantastic neighbourhood in New York. It is a changed environment and yet there is this terrible undercurrent of fear that is unwarranted.

How do feel after 40 years of cinema ?

I really don't know. Isn't it crazy? I really can't believe it. When I was a kid my mom said, 'By the time you are 16 or 17, your career will be over, so get used to that idea.' So at 18 I thought, 'Okay well I'll just try a little bit and I'll make some money and then I'll go on to other things.' But it just kind of continued. And then my mom always said, 'Women's careers are always over at 40. So, what are you going to do you after your 40s?' And I was very prepared for that, to say, 'Okay well I've been a producer and I've been a director, and I won't be an actor in my 40s.' It just keeps going.

How do you feel about the future?

I don't know ... I'm not too excited about acting in my 50s but I'm very excited about acting in my 70s. I feel like that is a whole new career of roles that will be so interesting and different. To be a real person who has lived with that experience and who has that face. And I am happy to embrace that. I am excited about that.

What do you think you would have become if you weren't an actress?

Well I didn't know. In college I knew I could write and that is what I did. But I guess I don't really enjoy it, because I don't do it. I probably would have ended up teaching. That seems to be my thing that I do well—I am a good talker. I am good at talking.

The Brave One opened in cinemas last September 12.

JODIE Foster taps into her inner killer in her latest movie

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iPOD AMBUSH

High note

Super and Apple gave Kate Torralba an iPod nano to thank her for giving the local music scene a boost. You can win one too!

By Pam Pastor
Photos by Jill Lejano

YOU'VE SEEN ONE KIND OF iPOD Ambush—the one where we stop you to find out what's been rocking your earphones. But there's another, even more exciting kind. The very cool people of Apple have given Super the license to spot local musicians we think you should hear. We stalk them at gigs, get them to spill the beans about their music and we give them an iPod Nano (yeah the older, slimmer one)—a gift from us and Steve Jobs for giving the local music scene a boost. But here's the really cool part—every time we give them an iPod Nano, we get to give you one too.

This week, we iPod Ambushed champion multitasker Kate Torralba.

Caught at ... the exclusive preview of Greenbelt 5 featuring her collection. Kate said, "It was a bit surreal—but great! The reality of having the store finally sunk in, haha. My family, friends, clients and colleagues came to support me—it felt like it was my birthday! I'm so thankful to my family and hardworking staff, Ayala Land, Atelier Almario, Ralph's Liquor Store, and Cibo for helping me put it together!"

Currently busy with: the opening of her new store which she says will feature "Everything KT! The clothes, the purses, the colors, the kitsch, and even the music! More than anything, it's a labor of love."

Describes her music as ... "A hodgepodge of the stuff I like, translated to piano. I've always been a rock chick but was trained in classical piano—and I dabble in pop every now and then. So imagine what that sounds like. Sad, intense but pretty, I'd like to think. Music really is my first love!"

What's one song you can't stop listening to now? 1234 by Feist. I love it so much!!

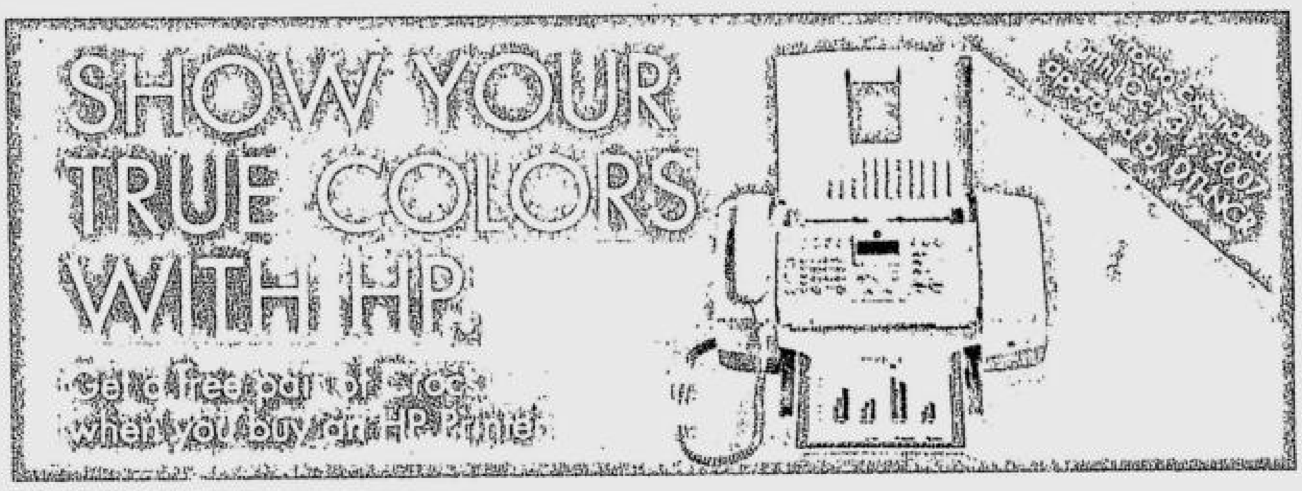
MULTITASKING MUSICIAN. "Music is my first love!" says Kate Torralba

What five songs should our readers put in their iPods? *Aaah* i'm such a music lover, doing these lists kills me! How can you pick just five?!?! Anything from Feist's latest offering - the Reminder. In The Meantime -Spacehog; I'd Rather Dance with You - Kings of Convenience; Do You Remember the First Time? - Pulp; and even if it isn't new, 'If I Ever Feel Better' by Phoenix. It's my picker-upper song.

How to get your dose of Kate Torralba: Check out the first-ever Kate Torralba store on exhibit at the Greenbelt 3 lobby which will run until Sept. 23. Kate will be playing at the Oh Inday! event in Saguijo on Sept. 25 with Cambio, Chilitees, Julianne, Champagne Morales, Imago and The Ronnies. Her first EP will be available in her store in December.

Win an iPod Nano!

Prove to us that you're Kate Torralba's biggest fan and win an iPod Nano! Be as creative as you can. E-mail your entries to super@inquirer.com.ph along with your name, age, school/office and contact info.



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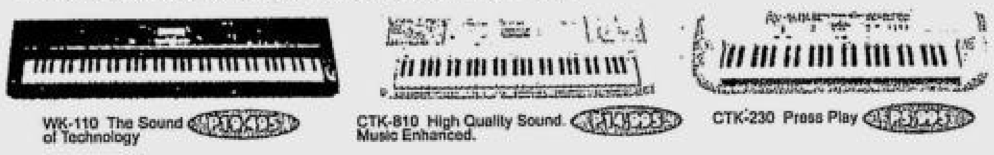

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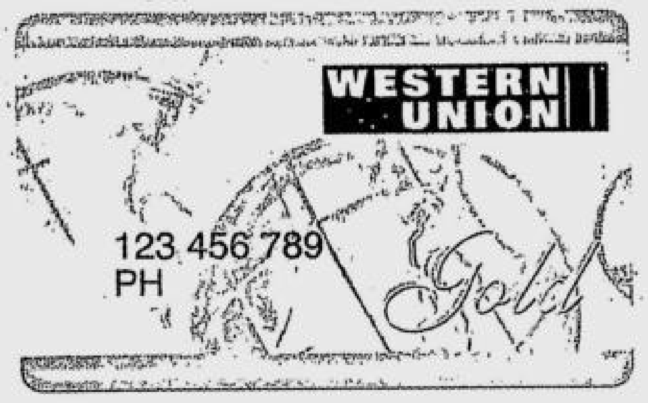

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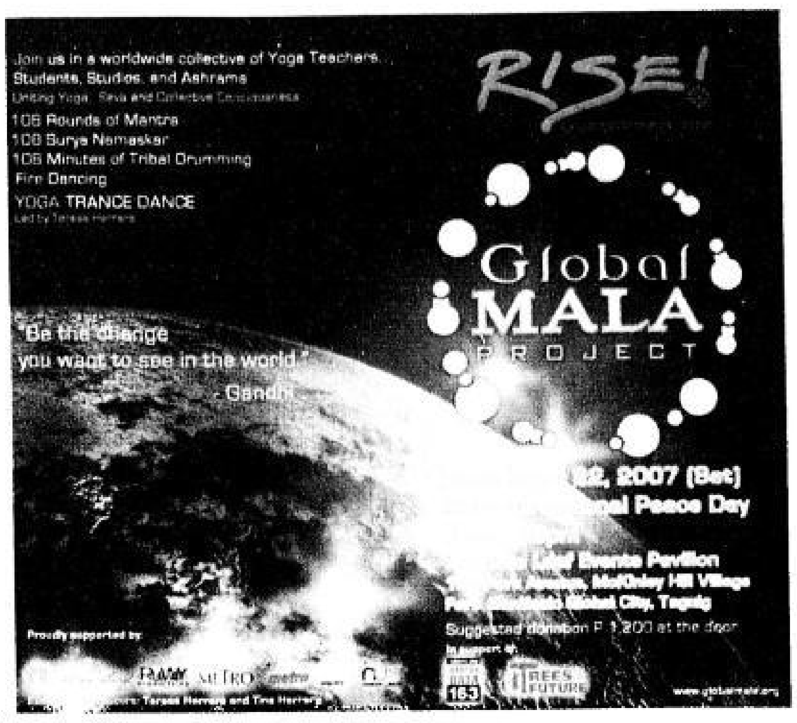
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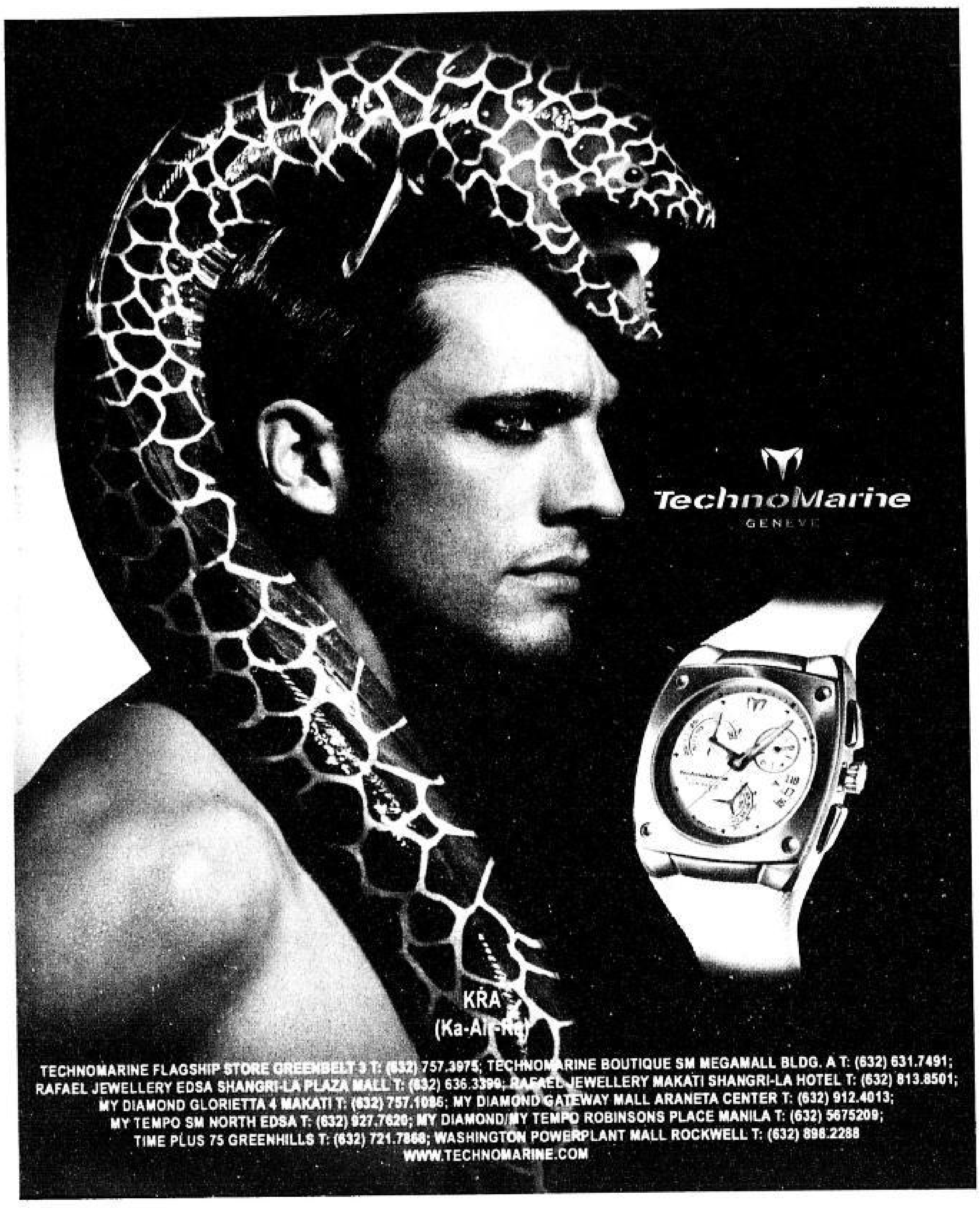
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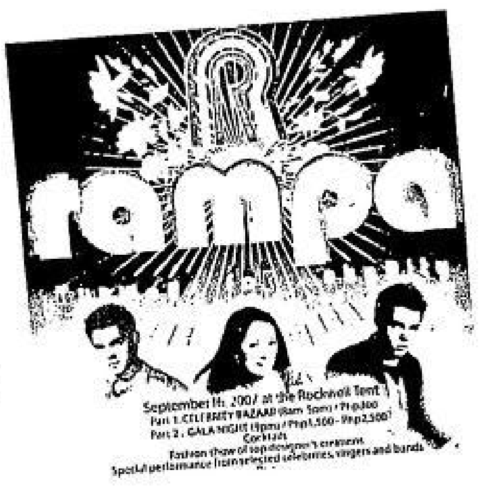
24/7 Super Radar

By Paolo R. Reyes
and Janine Cuenca-Dario

SEE supermodels take the runway for a good cause. Tomorrow, Sept. 16, the Gutierrez siblings—Ruffa, Raymond, and Richard—will hold RRRAMPA: Runway for Charity at the Rockwell Tent, Makati. The fund-rasing event for Make-A-Wish Foundation and World Vision will feature a whole-day celebrity bazaar, a fashion show, and an auction of designer creations (9 p.m.) during the evening gala. Call 729-7459, 727-2536 or email roofachild@gmail.com.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Rehab is for everybody!

OUT THE WINDOW

Tals Diaz

SOMEWHERE BETWEEN heaven and the ninth circle of hell, and near the epicenter of Hollywood, lies a mythical, magical place. It is frequented by famous rock stars and celebutantes, and remains a popular hangout, next to jail of course. It's called Rehab.

I truly wonder what those hallowed sanctuaries look like, and what exactly constitutes their 12-step recovery programs, especially since every star who comes out of it is always touted as "fresh," as in, "Fresh out of rehab, Lindsay/Britney/Nicole now vows to focus on charity work and saving the whales!"

With dreamlike, ethereal names such as "Promises," "Wonderland," or "Priory," I get these visual pegs of a netherworldly spa, with snow-white unicorns frolicking in vast, perfectly manicured lawns, and infinity pools edged with giant, blooming red roses. Freshly squeezed fruit juice and milk is served everywhere by statuesque attendants dressed in white, constantly smiling at you with gleaming, perfect rows of teeth.

Then again, it could be just a front for what is really a Clockwork Orange-like facility, with patients subjected to a modern version of the Ludovico Technique: they're drugged and strapped down in chairs, eyelids are pried open by steel pincers, and they're forced to watch those crucial scenes in "Requiem for a Dream" to induce nausea. In that case, Amy Winehouse has every right to say no, no, no to her very concerned peers trying to make her go, go, go.

Pop cultural purgatory

Whatever it is, rehab is a sort of no-fly zone, a safehouse away from the paparazzi that promises a second life to the wayward. It is a

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September

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15	Bikram Yoga	Relax and re-energize with Bikram Yoga by guru Tristan Choa	Unit 1 503 St. Corporate Center, 141 Valero cor Sedeno Sts., Makati 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm
22	Free workouts	Build your body at one of the country's top gyms, Slimmer's World	Slimmer's World International Pasay Rd cor Hernandez Sts. 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm
29	Belly Dancing	Tone your tummies with Jill Ngo of Peak Performance	Sacred Heart School/Studio Glorietta 3, Makati City 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm

October

6	Walking Tour of Intramuros	See Manila in a whole new light with historian Carlos Celdran	San Agustin Church, Intramuros, Manila 9:30 am - 12:00 pm
13	Old Manila Walks	Ivan ManDy takes you on a tour of the historic streets of Binondo, Manila	Binondo Church, Manila 2:00 pm - 5:30 pm
20	Images of Rock at the MET Museum	A gallery tour featuring *The Rocked Age: Images of Loud Music Culture.*	Metropolitan Museum Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Complex, Manila 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm
27	Great Filipino Artists at Ayala Museum	See masterpieces of Juan Luna, Fernando Amorsolo, Fernando Zobel & Damian Domingo	Ayala Museum Makati Ave. cor. Dela Rosa Sts Greenbelt Park Makati City 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm

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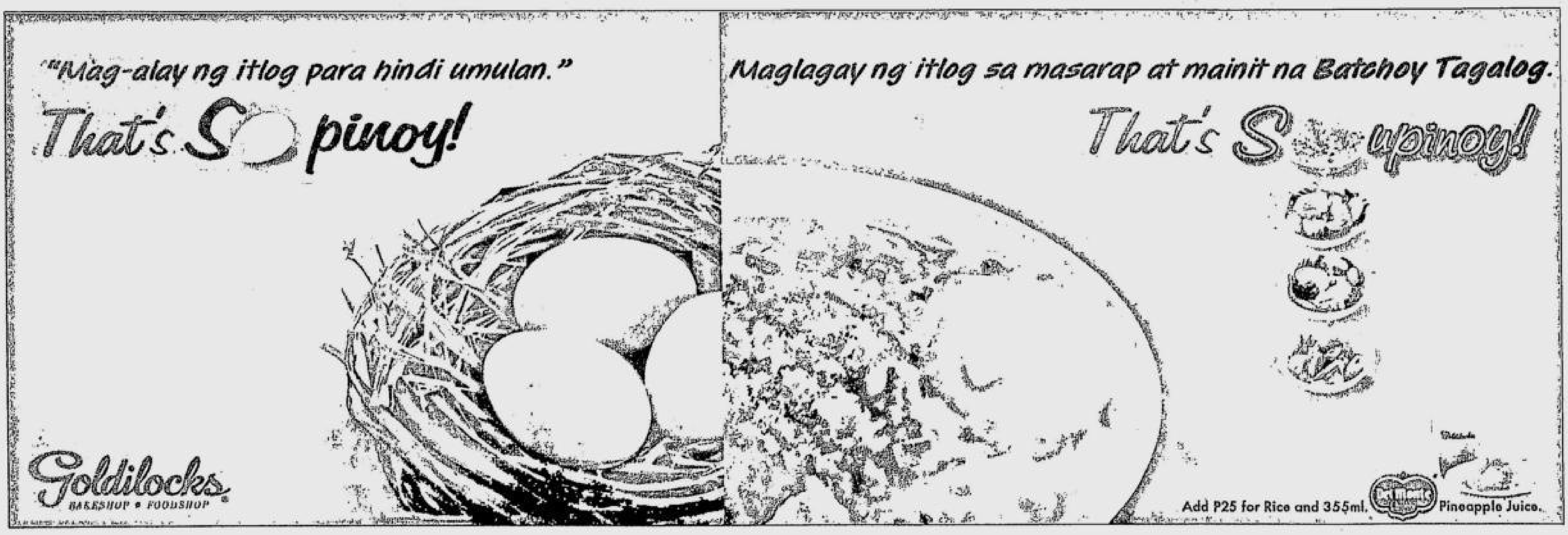

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Add P25 for Rice and 355ml. Pineapple Juice.

"IT'S dusty here!"

White powder, silver screen

Hollywood as pop culture pushers

By Wanggo Gallaga

HOLLYWOOD HAS its share of wired moments. Films have opened a window into the world of cocaine use and whether or not most films have dwelled on its consequences, coke always manages to come out looking like the most glamorous drug. Here's a line-up:

Scarface

Horribly yet deliciously violent, "Scarface" was written by Oliver Stone and directed by Brian de Palma and stars Al Pacino as Tony Montana. A Cuban hit man claiming political asylum in the US, Tony Montana rises in the coke underworld after his first violent brush of it where his friend gets dismembered with a chainsaw! If someone getting dismembered at the beginning isn't violent enough for you, wait for the ending when Tony, after taking an immense amount of powder up the nose, ends up arming himself with an M16 assault rifle and a grenade launcher and defends himself against the hit men of a Bolivian drug lord.

Traffic

So much ado about some fine white powder! Multiple storylines all interconnected but never intersecting, as told by the very able Steven Soderbergh in his Academy Award winning directorial effort. Most memorable is Erika Christensen in her MTV movie award winning role (best breakthrough artist) as the daughter of a conservative judge (Michael Douglas) who is a coke fiend and in one scene, wired to a point of almost being a zombie, she prostitutes herself for money to pay for her hit. Now isn't that Daddy's Little Girl?

Boogie Nights

Mark Wahlberg is Dirk Diggler, a porn star whose meteoric rise is only equaled by his great big fall (and his rather enormous package!). An addiction to cocaine and methamphetamines causes impotence and, later on, paranoia, which spells disaster for Dirk Diggler. The lowest point? Cocained induced confidence makes him think he can sing. It's actually so hilarious, if it weren't so sad. Superb performance by Wahlberg. Superb!

SHE nose her lines.

Blow

Penelope Cruz, Johnny Depp and a bowl of cocaine. Need I say more?

Cruel Intentions

Being bad never looked so cool! Sarah Michelle Gellar's Kathryn Merteuil, by appearances, is the perfect girl—well put-together, articulate, smart, fashionable, beautiful and rich. To top it all off? She wears a crucifix around her neck. Isn't that lovely? If only people knew that's where she keeps her supply of cocaine when she needs to find the strength to have to portray Miss Mary Sunshine 24/7. Now isn't that ironic?

Gia

Well, more than the true story of a super model's rise and fall and struggle with substance abuse, it's watching Angelina Jolie's breakthrough performance as the title character Gia Carangi. At the height of her bad girl days, Jolie brings the super model back to life and then dies when she contracts AIDS from a contaminated needle after she kicks her habit. She should never have done heroin …

PENE for your thoughts

True Romance

Directed by Tony Scott and written by Quentin Tarantino, Christian Slater finds himself in love with a prostitute played by Patricia Arquette and marrying her the very next day, only to find himself in a confrontation with her pimp, a white man who thinks he's black, played wonderfully by Gary Oldman. As Slater leaves, he brings the wrong suitcase, which is filled with cocaine and finds himself going to Hollywood to sell it. Unforgettable movie moment? Bronson Pinchot, from the television show "Perfect Strangers," who plays a Hollywood executive, gets caught by cops on the road with a face full of cocaine. Balki Bartokomous a coke fiend? Who knew?

Honorable Mentions

Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas

"Monty Python" alumni Terry Gilliam directs Johnny Depp and Benecio del Toro in the film adaptation of Hunter Thompson's novel. Playing journalists heading out to Las Vegas, the two main characters take copious amount of different illegal substances causing all of reality to distort around them. Coke was one of many things they took but it's the scene with mescaline that takes the cake!

THE day after yay

A Scanner Darkly

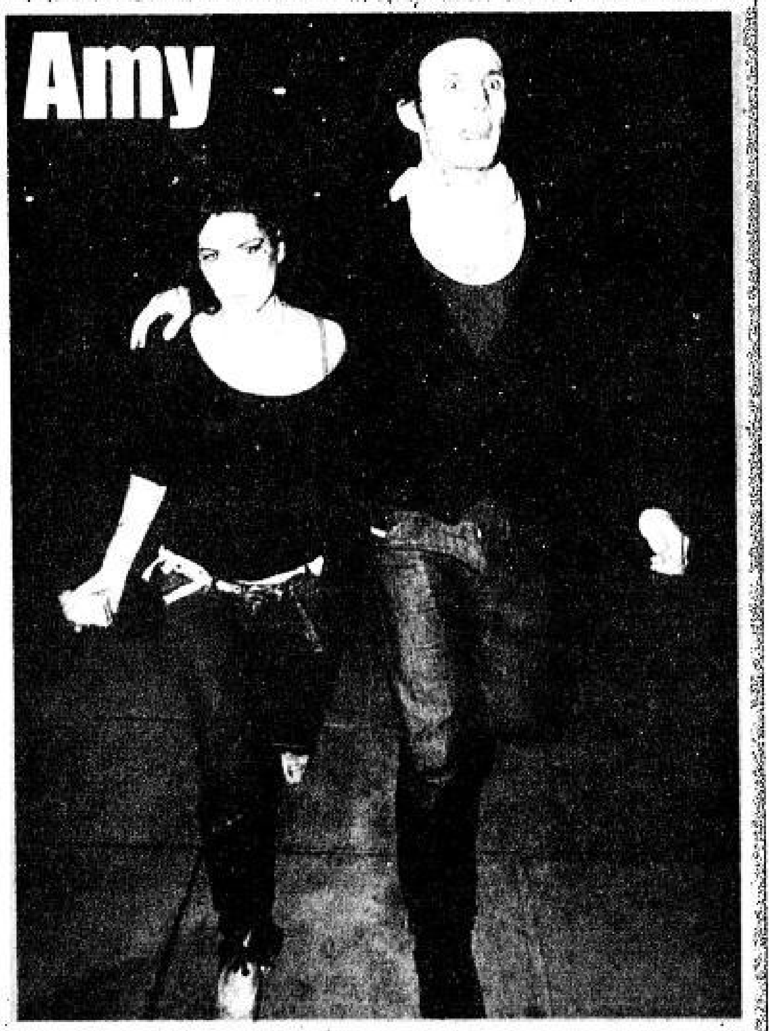
While the movie is mostly about the fictional drug Substance D and its dreamy, hallucinating and schizophrenic effects, Winona Ryder's Donna is a coke fiend. Done completely in rotoscope animation, the actors engage in screwed up drug-induced conversations as Keanu Reeves's Bob Arctor, an undercover narcotics agent, tries to infiltrate the drug underworld. More than a drug movie, there's the subtext of each actor in the film who have had their brush with illegal substances—Keanu Reeves, Winona Ryder, Woody Harrelson and Robert Downey Jr.

Pulp Fiction

Not really a coke moment, since the drug shown is heroin but it was mistaken as cocaine in the film and creates a lasting impression. If Uma Thurman's dancing didn't get her the Oscar nomination, it's certainly for dying on screen with a line of heroin (and possibly her "resurrection" scene courtesy of a shot of adrenaline straight to the heart). A word of warning: know your drugs! Heroin and cocaine may look alike but they get into the system in very different ways. Be warned!

"DAD I swear I thought it was baking soda."

Chasing Amy



By Pam Pastor

THEY TRIED TO make her go to rehab but she said no, no, no.

That is until last month, when Amy Winehouse, the singer behind the hit song "Rehab," collapsed after taking a cocktail of drugs (reports said it was a mix of heroin, ecstasy, cocaine, ketamine and alcohol) and had to be rushed to the hospital. The 23-year-old musician soon checked into a British rehab center with her husband Blake Fielder-Civil but they only stayed for a few days.

Then, a couple of weeks later, she became fodder for gossip blogs again when she had a violent fight with her husband that led to her running out of their London hotel room bruised, gashed and splattered with blood. Blake's face was also covered with blood and scratches. They made up that same night—walking back to the hotel together.

Hearing speculations about her husband hurting her, Amy defended Blake with a series of texts. "Blake is the best man in the world. We would never ever harm each other," she texted blogger Perez Hilton, saying that the fight started because she was cutting herself and Blake caught her about to do drugs in their hotel room.

Amy and Blake's parents have all been alarmed by recent events. Worried about what they suspect is their children's cocaine, crack and heroine addiction, Amy Winehouse's father-in-law went on BBC radio and called for a boycott, asking fans to stop buying her records to force Amy to recognize her problem.

Last Sept. 2, an article in the Daily Mail reported that Amy's record label sent her to the Caribbean on vacation so she can clean herself up. But according to The Sunday Mirror, the staff at the resort where Amy and Blake stayed reported that Amy vomited blood in her room and refused their offer to call a doctor.

Amy showed up days later for a performance at the Mercury Music Prize awards looking sober and healthy. But her mother is still worried. "Amy is playing Russian roulette with her health and musical gift. She's lost herself. We're not talking about my Amy. It's not someone I recognize. She has become her own stage creation," she said in a recent interview.

Amy, who won the Best British Female Artist Award at this year's BRIT Awards, has made fans out of a lot of people—even Prince has covered one of her songs. Countless Amy fans are worried about the singer's situation not just because of the damage it can do to her career but because of how much her health has downspiraled.

There's no doubt that there are countless fingers crossed around the world, hoping she'd say yes, yes, yes before it's too late.

Rehab is for everybody!

From page E1

pop cultural purgatory that offers a chance for redemption even after a seemingly irreparable scandale. I am reminded of that Reverend Ted Haggard who, after being exposed by a male prostitute for a 3-year affair, resurrects in the real world a few weeks later, restored as "completely heterosexual." (Makes me wonder what the treatment was like to cure homosexuality, though I think it would have something to do with banning Madonna videos and late night chatrooms.)

Should rehab then be limited to substance abuse? Addiction, after all, is not limited to pills, potables and porn. Vices, be they shabu or shoes, are instant escapes, eject buttons from reality, and are indicative of much deeper cravings borne out of personal fears and insecurities. You remove those crutches and you reveal human frailties and weaknesses, which are the real ailments in need of purification. Everybody is a work in progress, after all.

In this light, perhaps there should be alternative rehab programs for our very own local "wayward" souls seeking a new shot at life. A few humble suggestions:

Olympus rehabilitation for irrepressible snobs

Formerly known as the Coño Rehabilitation Centre (note British spelling), it was recently renamed after the celestial home of the ancient Greek gods, an homage to Malu Fernandez's recent Mediterranean sojourn (and downward spiral into the fiery bowels of the blogosphere). Olympus Rehab offers treatment for acute Status Addiction.

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Clients are made to detox from credit cards, LV luggage, cocktails served in long stemmed glasses, "air-con" and basically anything that signifies a luxurious lifestyle (or gives an image of it). Their 12-step process includes daily meditation, viewings of "ASAP," advanced Tagalog lessons, regular rush hour commutes, and aromatherapy sessions with Axe and Charlie cologne-scented oils.

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Guilty former rulers undergo detoxification from gambling, women and illegal wealth. The real addiction, of course, is power. Treatment lasts for several years, or until, well, death.

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Anonymous anonymous

Also known as rehab for has-been celebrities and ex-socialites. The recovery program for has-beens involves not watching old episodes of their once-successful programs or movies. Instead, they undergo daily grammar sessions where they learn how to reuse the present tense. Skills training focuses on hosting provincial talent shows and beauty pageants, for possible future work in Nueva Vizcaya.

Ex-socialites are made to sit around a circle, holding hands while repeating in unison the mantra coined by INQUIRER's revered founder, Eggie Apostol: "There is more to life than the society pages. Ommmm."

Rehabaianas

For those who will soon be addicted to addiction, thinking that the only prerequisite for coolness these days is to be recovering from something. But as soon as admitting your addictions becomes a widespread phenomenon, it becomes mainstream, thereby making sobriety the new drug of choice.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
super

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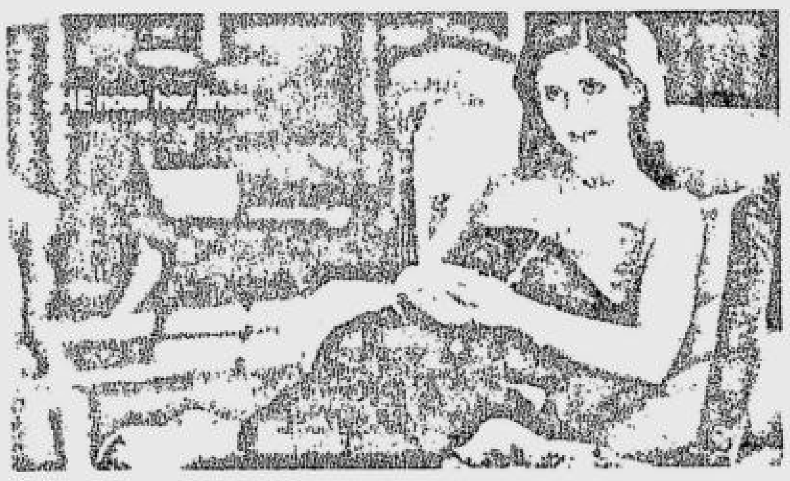

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RETAKE OF PRECEDING FRAME

My life with The Quentin

(Volume One)

By Quark Henares

Part I: How Pulp Fiction Changed My Life

IT WAS MARCH 1995, I REMEMBER. THE school year had just ended and to celebrate I headed on down to Yves Vincent, my neighborhood video store. I asked them the question I had asked a thousand times before—"*Andiyan na ba ang 'Pulp Fiction'?*" To my surprise Gorie the clerk said, "*Oo, sa wakas andito na.*"

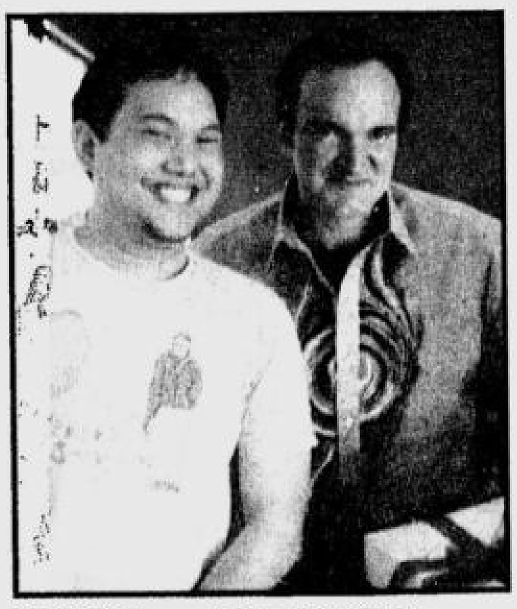
It was laserdisc, but it ended up being a bad Chinese copy. I paused the movie and reflected on whether I should continue watching despite the shoddy quality and decided that yes, I should. Little did I know that that bad Chinese bootleg laser disc would go on to change my life. With its hysterical and realistic dialogue, surprises around every corner, uncomfortably lovable characters and unconventional way of revealing plot, Pulp Fiction became my favorite film. It wasn't only that—all my life I had known that I wanted to be a storyteller, but it was only after watching Pulp Fiction that I realized what medium I wanted to work in. With cinema characters became more real, collaborating with people to tell a story seemed more fun, and most importantly, I realized how rewarding it would be watching your intended audience react en masse WHILE watching your work with them. Pulp was that turning point in my life that made me decide to be a filmmaker.

Part II : The Reason I Now Have Tanduay in My Room Even Though I Don't Drink

"Hey, you know what? I've got enough of these in my luggage and don't think I really need any more," he says, as he hands us a gold box with a logo saying, "Tanduay 50 years."

Quentin Tarantino is handing me a Tanduay Anniversary box. In his hotel room. I may have dreamt of something like this when I was a brand new film fan at the age of 14, but if I ever did it was one of those fantasies that were swept under the rug for eternity like getting to make out with Teri Hatcher or having an affair with your hot high school teacher. Tarantino paces back and forth as he talks, doing his signature hand motions to stress certain points. I feel like I know this guy, with all the interviews I've seen and read of his before this moment.

This is just like another one of those interviews—except it's all happening in front of me, and apparently I'm the interviewer. "OK, OK. Favorite character I've ever written. That's a good question. I think, without a doubt, it would be The Bride. Then Jules. Then Mr. Blonde. Then Gogo." Tarantino's got a bit of a reputation—egomaniac, a**hole, conceited filmmaker—but I find that impossible to believe. I just dropped him a line to tell him that I'm leaving his videoke VCDs with the front desk, and suddenly this guy invites me up to his hotel room to shoot the sh*t and talk film an hour before he has to leave for the airport. And really—Tarantino's doing all the entertaining. He's telling me about how he got Michael Keaton to play the same character in both "Jackie Brown" and "Out of Sight." He's talking about his plans for his next film, the wonderfully-titled "Inglorious Bastards" ("It's the next huge mountain I have to get over. It's a big mountain, but after that I'm thinking maybe I can see the clearing."). Finally he talks about how much he likes it here and how he wants to come back as soon as possible ("All this is business. But now I've done my job and I've met a lot of great people and when I come back there won't be work anymore. I'll just drop by and say 'Hey guys!' and hang out."). I then realized something about Quentin Tarantino that's never really been touched on by the thousands of articles written about him: The guy's a sweetheart. It's endearing how much cinema means to him, and how I can honestly believe this guy's going to watch every single Filipino DVD handed to him during the trip. He's a swell guy, and it's great when the person who's indirectly changed your life actually ends up being a swell guy.



ME WITH Cannes Palme d'Or winner Quentin Tarantino. Photo by Short Palm d'Or winner Raymond Red.

Part III : How I Became Good Friends with A Neo-Nazi

Sandwich guitarist Diego Castillo and I didn't like each other much, back in the day. To him I was an obnoxious spoiled brat, and I thought of him as a scary neo-nazi. One summer day in '94 he comes in to NU 107 wearing a T-shirt with the logo "Reservoir Dogs" on it, and I ask, "What's that? A band?"

"It's a movie."

"Yeah? Never heard of it."

"Rent it. I think you'll like it."

And that was the longest conversation we'd had at that point. I don't know why, but right after that I headed on to Yves Vincent and rented a laser of "Reservoir Dogs." It blew me away. It was the first time in my young pubescent life that I'd ever seen people talk about horribly obscene stuff, or saw bystanders get shot randomly, or watched someone getting tortured (to Stealer's Wheel's "Stuck In The Middle With You" nonetheless). I didn't even know that there were movies like this! Reservoir Dogs set me on a path to becoming a cinephile, but *it* was also the beginning of a beautiful friendship. Shortly after that Diego would recommend films like "A Clockwork Orange," "Goodfellas," "The Shining," "Fresh, Boyz N Tha Hood," "Taxi Driver," "The Godfather" and "Scarface." We'd talk nonstop about those movies, and we haven't stopped talking to this day. We're now about to start the first movie we've written together, and I dedicated my first movie to him and his then-girlfriend Myrene, because, as the credits said, "They started it all." Probably should have put Tarantino in there as well.

Part IV : Stupid Things I Say When I Meet People I Admire

This is how I met Quentin Tarantino. In the middle of a commercial interlock, one of our photographers at Blow-Up Babies calls me and tells me that Cinemanila head Tikoy Aguiluz has just booked the studio for a shoot with Tarantino, Cirio Santiago and Eddie Romero. Before they could say "blueberry pie" I was rushing out and driving like the devil, calling all my partners to get there before the session was over. When I got there I saw my partner JA touching up the aforementioned portrait.

"What?"

"*Wala na sila. Pati nga ako di ko naabutan eh.*"

"What?"

"*Oo. Pumasok lang sila, nagpa*-picture *ng dalawang minuto at umalis.*"

"What?"

"*Bawal nga magpa*-picture *yung iba eh. Umalis na sila.*"

"MOTHERF*CKING SH*T F*CK G*DD*MM*T HOLY CRAP F*CKING SH*T"

A few days later our photographer Mia Tengco said she could hear me scream the aforementioned phrases from inside the studio while she was taking pictures of a 2-year-old and her mommy.

Whatever. The kid will eventually hear those words anyway so it's better if they start young. I call Tikoy and ask him where they are and he says Cibo. So I run over there and he welcomes me into the restaurant. They introduce me to Tarantino and I kneel down and say, "Mr. Tarantino, I became a filmmaker because I saw Pulp Fiction. It is an honor and a pleasure to meet you." He was very gracious about it—you know, "the pleasure is all mine" and all that. I cut him off by saying, "As tribute, I present to you my softcore porn film."

Which makes the above statement number eight in the "Stupid Things I Say When I Meet People I Admire" series. Yes, I wonder myself why it was "Gamitan" that I first gave him. Truth is, I couldn't find copies of the others at the time. We talked a bit, but that first meeting I think I was just staring at him, my mouth agape the whole time. Before he left I decided it was the best time to have a picture taken with him. I looked around and the only person I found was Raymond Red!

When I was a high school film geek trekking out to all these film festivals to watch films by my favorite short filmmaker Raymond Red and you told me that one day he would take a picture of me and Quentin Tarantino I would have never believed you.

Watch out for Volume II next week.

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Calling All Mommies!

The "brrr" months are here! As you look forward to fun days ahead for the family, make sure that you are well-stocked with comfy clothes for your little ones as they get in on loads of fun and action.

Our value-plus September Sale event – the last great baby sale of the year – offers you exciting choices on play clothes and day wear for babies and toddlers, all of which are cute, casual, comfortable, durable, and available at tempting discounts.

Enjoy shopping for your little ones!

The Infants' Wear Family
SM Department Store

Value-shopping for baby clothes at SM

Great discounts, special buys, loads of free gifts, and exciting activities are in store for shoppers and their little ones during the month-long Baby Sale at the SM Infants' Wear Department.

It's value at its best with attractive discounts on collections of casual wear comfy playwear.

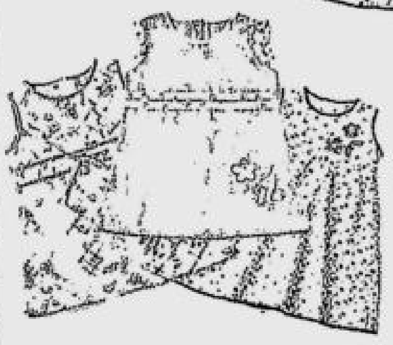
Baby's favorite Baby Looney Tunes friends join in the with photo opportunities and a Playtime Play Area from 11am to 6pm on the following dates at these branches:

Sept 14-16	SM Makati
Sept 27&28	SM North Edsa
Sept 30	SM Ortigas

special buys at P150 each

Cute cotton dresses for toddlers aged 2 to 3 years.

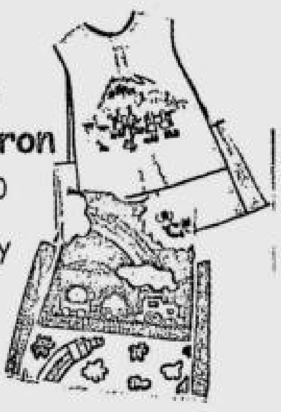
spaghetti-strapped A-line frocks



sleeveless cotton dresses in floral prints

free gifts for baby!

FREE toddler activity apron



with every P500 single-receipt purchase of Baby Looney Tunes items at the Infants' Wear Department

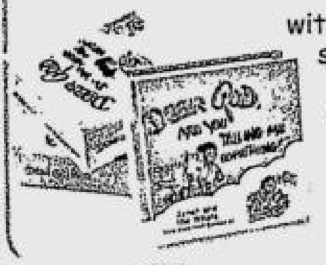
FREE VIP pass

to PLAYTIME WITH BABY LOONEY TUNES with every P300 single-receipt purchase of Puppy Scooby Doo, Super Baby, or Baby Looney Tunes items

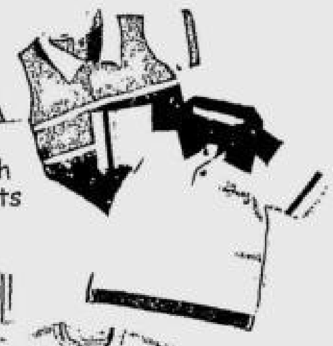
plus! **Free loot bags** for the first 50 kiddie registrants to the Playtime Playground

FREE Children's Bible Stories

with every P300 single-receipt purchase of Cotton Stuff items



great value for mommy!



two-tone cotton-knit polo, and yellow top in honeycomb weave with accents

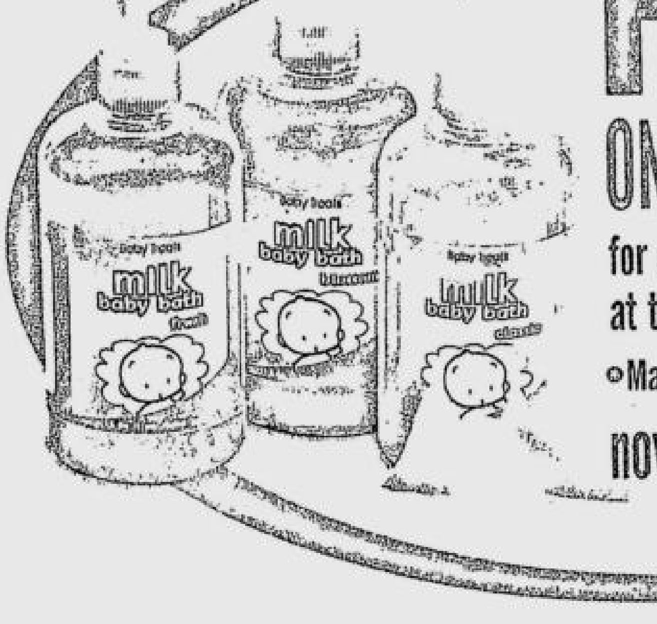
two-piece cotton-knit coordinates in soft pastels

denim pants and overalls, printed cotton shirt

at the Infants' Wear Department

Baby SALE

up to 50% off on great choices now thru Sept. 30



Free ONE (1) BABY MILK BATH

for every P700 single receipt purchase at the Infants' Wear Department

- Maximum of 3 bottles per transaction

now thru Sept. 16 only

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3826, Series of 2007

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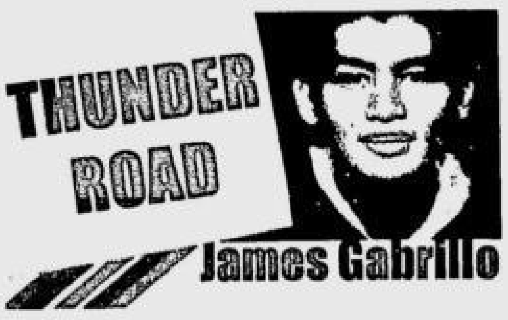


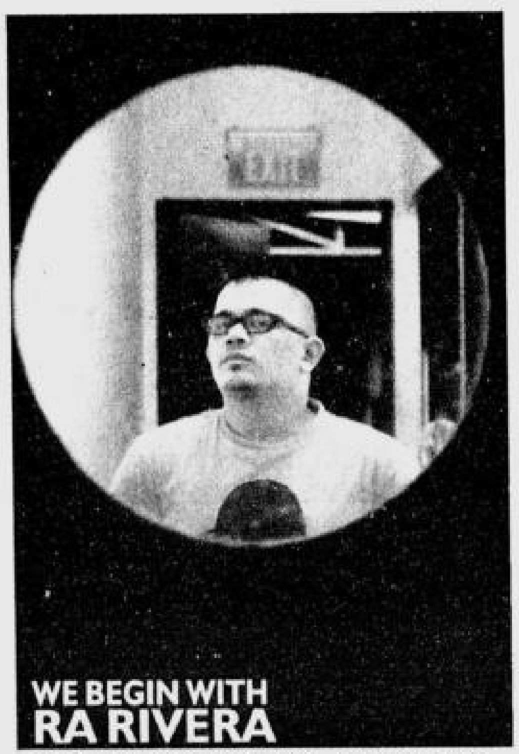
THUNDER ROAD

James Gabrillo

Look at these 5 directors and see the difference between having an eye and having a vision

THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT electronic rhythms creeping in to and out of songs that captures my interest. They're subtle yet exciting; they operate under peculiar types of energies but they never draw attention to themselves.

Like strong, happy beats, five directors are strutting their sensitive, well-versed thuggery with integrity and edge. There's radicalism, but you get it. There's none of the elitism, which I really hate—none of the pompous half-formed ideas. Most if not all of their pieces have a sense of humor, and that's fine.



WE BEGIN WITH RA RIVERA

who's influenced by Tito, Vic and Joey, Rene Requiestas and Joey de Leon films, The Beatles, Volkswagen, Adidas, low-fi, low-budget things, films on Pinoy Box Office, required Surrealist, French New Wave films in school, Mike de Leon, Lino Brocka, and his contemporaries like Quark Henares and Marie Jamora.

RA'S STRANGE SHOW

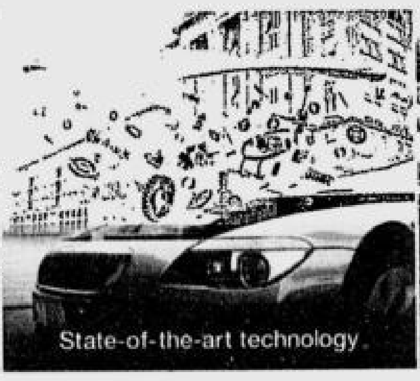
"Strange Brew" lasted only for 35 episodes, roughly three seasons; but RA's pretty proud of this particular body of work. He cites the influence that the show has on his generation. The night before I talked to him, he found out from his family members that the show is discussed in an Art Studies class in UP. It's also been a subject of a few theses. RA wonders how the kids deconstructed the show, but feels good nonetheless.

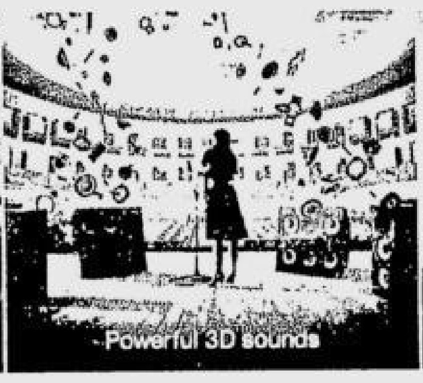
RA ADMITS THAT

he doesn't know how to write. His creative process, he shares, is pretty spontaneous. Often, he creates the concept the night before the shoot itself. Sometimes he's on the set, sitting in the corner, making the outline right there. But RA doesn't advise kids to copy him—he tells them to strive to learn the process of writing a script and creating a storyboard.

BRAVE/F3

True-to-life colours


State-of-the-art technology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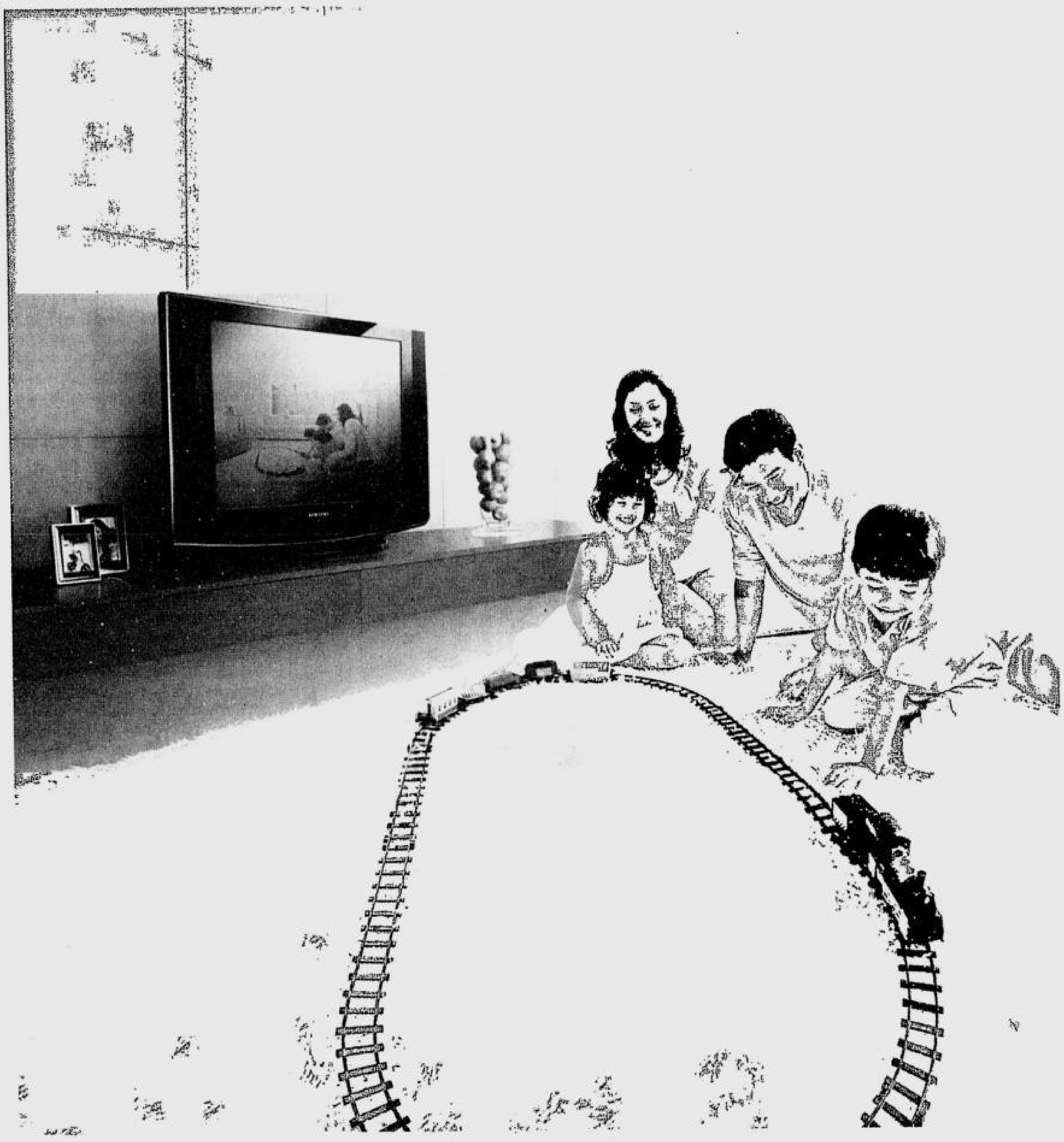

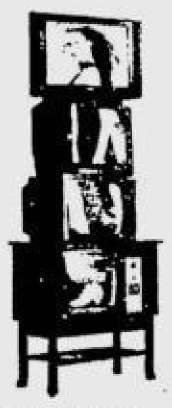
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Buffet 8-5-0 at Manila Pavilion

SEASONS, MANILA PAVILION HOTEL'S interactive lifestyle restaurant offers its exciting selection of international dishes for only P850. Yes there has never been a reasonably priced buffet this lavish, stylish and luscious as the Buffet 8-5-0.

For the food adventurer who wants value for their money, explore the four buffet stations teeming with dishes from around the globe. See the enticing skewer display of the freshest catch and choice cuts at the hot station. Creatively presented right next to the hot gourmet dishes, MPH executive chef Niko De Lueg points out, "You can choose your own skewer or slice from gindara, tuna, lapu-lapu, salmon, prawns, swordfish, beef tender, rack of lamb, etcetera and have it cooked just the way you want it."

And how does a sushi and California roll buffet sound to you? At the cold station, a spread of gorgeous appetizers awaits. From the popular Japanese dishes and the freshest greens for the health buffs to your favorite hors d' oeuvre and antipasti. A little bit of everything may be a good idea to start your meal.

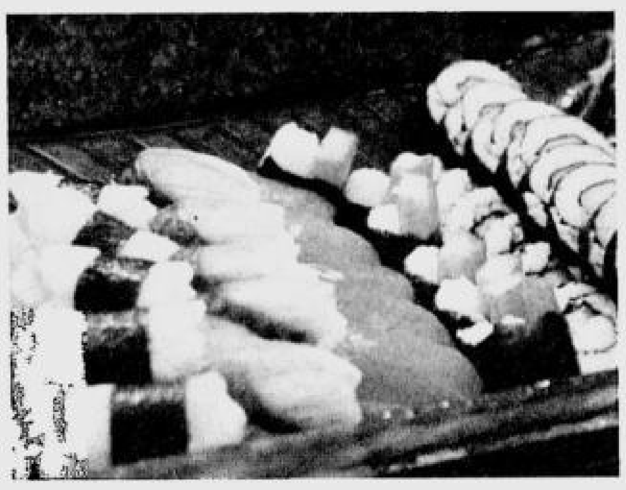
Hop on the pastry station for a feast of sugary treats where a halo-halo and ice cream bar is ready to serve frozen delights daily. And since there will always be a fresher way of enjoying an old favorite, allow the friendly buffet station experts to guide you through a new gastronomic adventure in your every visit.

"A taste of all the world's culinary pride for only P850 is one rare treat you wouldn't want to miss," exclaimed MPH F&B director Alex Zuzon. "We are inviting everyone for a dining adventure here at Seasons," he added.

Priced at P850 net per person, the Buffet 8-5-0 is available during lunch from 11:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. and dinner from 6:30 p.m. - 10:30 p.m. beginning Sept. 17.

For inquiries and reservations, call Manila Pavilion Hotel at 526-1212 extension 2318.

MANILA Pavilion's F&B director Alex Zuzon and executive chef Niko De Lueg



TABEMASHOU AT THE BELLEVUE!

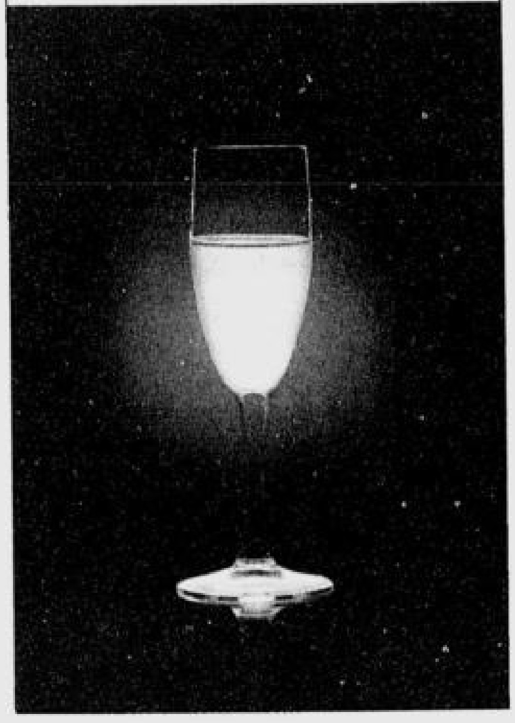
Itedakimas! Get your chopsticks ready as the Bellevue's Café d'Asie, the hottest food haunt south of the Metro, serves up a Japanese feast on Sept. 17 to 28. Enjoy crispy tempura, succulent sashimi and other scrumptious dishes from the Land of the Rising Sun for only P950++. Meanwhile, indulge in a harmonious combination of cake that melts in your mouth, sweet and supple Irish cream and mouthwatering choco mocha beans finished with a swirl of flavorful mocha mirror -- The Bellevue's Cake of the Month for September. Enjoy this sweet and unique blend as you nurse a cup of coffee at the Bellevue's Pastry Corner or bring a box whole for the whole family. For inquiries, call 771-8181.

QUANTUM HOTELS AND RESORTS AT THE PHILIPPINE TRAVEL MART

Quantum Hotels and Resorts lent its all out support for the Philippine Travel Mart held recently at the Mega Trade Hall. Since its inception in 2000, Quantum Hotels and Resorts has managed three serviced apartments, BSA Tower, BSA Suites, and Perla Mansion; all strategically located in Makati's Central Business District. Last year, Quantum Hotels and Resorts expanded its operations by managing higher category serviced residences, namely the Malayan Plaza in the Ortigas Center and the Italian-inspired Subic Holiday Villas at the Subic Bay Freeport Zone in Zambales. Quantum Hotels and Resorts recently inked 3 more management contracts for properties in Quezon City and two in Boracay, namely; Torre Venezia, The Agrias Hotel and Boracay Beach Condominium. Joey Bernardino, Quantum Hotels and Resorts VP for sales and marketing reiterates that the group's main focus is on the continuing growth in properties and improvement of services, this is in line with the efforts of the DOT to reach the 3 million visitor count by the end of the year. For more information about Quantum Hotels and Resorts, call tel. nos. 864-0941 to 43 or log on to www.quantumsuites.com. In photo are (from left) DOT Secretary Ace Durano and Joey Bernardino, Quantum Hotels and Resorts VP for sales and marketing at the 18th Philippine Travel Mart held recently at the SM Megatrade Hall.

Tosca's 'A Schott of Burge'

ENJOY AN EVENING OF ELEGANCE AND style. Explore and learn about the science of pairing food, wine and glassware at Tosca - Dusit Hotel Nikko's new Italian restaurant. A variety of wines from one of Australia's leading wineries, Grant Burge from Barossa Valley, will be poured in different glassware especially developed by germany's leading glass manufacturer - Schott Zwiesel. Witness how wines will be elevated in taste by using the right glass. Italian chef Alessio Loddo created dishes that perfectly matches each featured wine. Do not miss this exciting opportunity on Monday, Sept. 17, 7 p.m. at Tosca. Hurry, limited seats only. Ticket price is P950 net per person. Tosca is located at the mezzanine level of Dusit Hotel Nikko. For inquiries, call 867-3333 local 3301 or 3310.



Relax and rejuvenate on an island in heaven

ISLAND SPA IS NOW IN RUSTAN'S Heaven on the Fifth at the 5th Level of Rustan's Makati. Right at the shopping and entertainment hub of Ayala Center, it can be aptly called as "a n oasis in the midst of the city." Authentic Chinese Therapeutic Foot Massage can be had at Island Spa for as low as the express (30 min.) rate of P375. Or you can have the works with a combined foot and back massage or a full body massage, your choice of Swedish or Shiatsu. Island Spa at Rustan's Heaven on the 5th also offers foot scrub, aromatherapy and the ultimate feeling of relaxation with its Hot Stone Massage. Nourish your soul with a visit to Island Spa at Heaven on the Fifth. For reservation or other details, call 496-8986. Island Spa is also at the 2nd floor of Jupiter Place, 136-138 Jupiter Street, Bel-Air, Makati City; tel. nos. 899-1234 and 751-8296.

Tony Roma's takeout, delivery and party catering services

TONY ROMA'S INtroduces their takeout, delivery and party catering services commencing this holiday season. Delivery service is within Alabang business district and residential nearest our Alabang Town Center branch and Makati business district and residential apartments and subdivisions nearest their Glorietta 4 branch. Party catering is also being handled by these two branches but has a widen territorial coverage, basically the key cities of Manila, Muntinlupa, Parañaque, Las Piñas, Quezon, Makati, Pasig, Pasay and the Municipality of San Juan and Taguig. Delivery services are available at the following hours: 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. from Mondays to Saturdays, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Sundays. And for Party Catering, they do either a cook-out (where they grill your barbeque menu right at your garden) or simply cook the barbeque food in their restaurant and deliver, set them up in chaffing dishes for your guest. They have set menus for you to choose from and they can also do a buffet of eat-all-you-can on barbecue. Tony Roma's basically caters to your personal needs as they make their food and services flexible for an ultimate dining experience. They can also bring their bar for your convenience.

For additional information, please contact our managers: tel: 757-1925/6 (Glorietta) or 771-1388 and 771-1788 (Alabang). Restaurants: Ground Floor, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati City 2nd Floor, Expansion Wing, Alabang Town Center, Muntinlupa City.

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909-7012

Brave pop sensibilities

From page F1

Photos by PONG IGNACIO

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Sonic Youth

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Every Home Deserves an Electrolux

With 100 years of European heritage and global experience in the appliance industry, Electrolux products are trusted worldwide to provide the best care for homes everywhere. From washers and dryers to refrigerators and ovens, Electrolux offers high-quality products that always have consumer needs and lifestyles in mind.

Available in over 150 countries, Electrolux plays a part in making the lives of many families easier everyday. Every second, two Electrolux products are sold somewhere in the world. Electrolux prides itself in making products that are not only functional and modern but also beautifully designed and easy to use.

For Electrolux, consumer insights are essential. They are used to develop appliances that deliver exactly what the consumer needs. Electrolux believes that thoughtfulness is a way of life and a way to create products that provide relevant and innovative solutions to various appliance needs. Electrolux front load washing machines and dryers are designed with the consumer in mind. They offer significant features that make it convenient and practical to give the best care for clothes with just a simple touch of a button. Electrolux front load washers are elegant and stylish making them a perfect fit for every home.

Electrolux front load washers are gentler on clothes making sure that even the most delicate fabrics get the best possible care. With many consumers investing on clothes they would like to use for as long as possible, this makes for an important concern that Electrolux addresses. With Electrolux, clothes last longer and receive a thorough wash every time. Even delicate fabrics are cared for both gently and efficiently without compromising performance. Front load washers also ensure less entangled fabrics to clean and protect clothes with every wash. The Aqua Shower Technology provides superior wash performance to clean even the most stubborn stains. This assures that clothes are always clean after washing.

Electrolux recognizes that the world's resources are valuable and that saving water is vital. In today's global climate when water crises abound in many countries, the need to save water has grown increasingly in the minds of consumers. In the Philippines, this holds true as well as more Filipinos recognize the value of saving water as supply decreases. Electrolux front load washers were made with saving water in mind, they use only 10 to 16 liters of water per wash for a savings of 30% to 70%. It is a way for consumers to help play their part in water conservation. Saving water also means using less detergent which ensures both savings and protection for the environment.

Electrolux washers and dryers are easy to use. They are made to be simple and friendly. The control panel of each washer features labeled buttons and dials that help owners make every use a trouble-free experience. Customized wash programs ensure that different types of fabrics, even delicate ones, are cleaned properly and protected. Electrolux front load washers automatically adjust the time and water needed to make every wash hassle-free.

Design plays an important role in the creation of every Electrolux washer and dryer. The elegant and sophisticated design makes for a stylish addition to every home. Electrolux front load washers and dryers can be stacked one on top of the other to save space in small laundry areas. This gives home owners more room for other items while also having beautifully designed appliances.

Drying clothes under the sun can easily wear out the color and texture of clothes, Electrolux dryers keep clothes looking newer longer and also eliminates the need for drying spaces especially during the rainy season. The anti-crease function reduces wrinkling and prevents creasing without damaging clothes and making them easier to iron.

Electrolux washing machines and dryers are designed to make life not only easier, but better as well. They understand that consumers value their clothes, their time and their investments and because of that, they offer front load washers and dryers that are trusted to give the best value for both quality and dependability.

Electrolux knows that consumers are proud of their homes and deserve only the most premium appliances. They want to make it easy for every home owner to have high quality front load washers and dryers that are gentle, friendly and efficient. Now, getting the best in life has never been easier with special discounts and easy payment schemes on Electrolux front load washers and dryers available at all major appliance dealers nationwide. Because they believe that every home deserves an Electrolux, investing in this premium brand is now as simple as using it.

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6kg Washer
EW560F
5kg Dryer
EDE425M
7kg Washer-Dryer
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Every home deserves an Electrolux

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On the set of 'The Echo' with Iza Calzado

CALZADO (right) with co-star Jamie Bloch, who plays her daughter in Hollywood remake of Yam Laranas' "Sigaw." PHOTO COURTESY OF IZA CALZADO

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

TORONTO, ONTARIO—WE CONTINUE with our coverage of our visit to the set of "The Echo" in Toronto: We chatted with Iza Calzado, who reprises her role in Yam Laranas' American remake of his film, "Sigaw."

Yam brought us to Iza's trailer for this interview. Of Yam, Iza said: "The cast and crew enjoy working with him. They say he's a cool guy. It's a relief to have him as director of my first international film—he makes me proud!"

Iza recently met Kevin Durand, who plays her policeman husband in "The Echo." "He's 6'6" tall!," she exclaimed.

As for the film's lead actor, Jesse Bradford ("Flags of Our Fathers"), Iza claimed the actor is now addicted to dried mangoes. Iza had brought with her many packets of this Philippine snack. She recounted her father's warning: "*Anak, baka harangin ka sa* Customs *sa dami ng dala mong* dried mangoes!"

Iza said that, in one scene with Jesse, he couldn't stop laughing. She explained that he was amused at the unusual situation he found himself in during the scene.

He eventually suppressed the fit and finished the scene, which we're sure will be one of the film's scary highlights. She also showed us pictures she took with her camera, when she was being fitted with a harness.

Carlos Leon, Madonna's ex and father of her daughter, Lourdes, is done filming his part. Iza shared, "Carlos was the first actor I acted with. He's very nice. He was my lunch buddy for a couple of days." She also found a lot of things in common with Amelia Warner, who plays Jesse's girlfriend.

Prosthetics

Jamie Bloch, who portrays Iza's daughter, passed by. The young actress, similarly attired as Iza, had a mass of frizzy hair, which was sprayed to look darker. She had prosthetics on, but her face was not made

ON THE SET/ F2

Jodie Foster's latest starrer triggers debate on justice and vengeance

FOSTER: Fierce intensity.

By Rito P. Asilo

"The Brave One"
D: Neil Jordan
S: Jodie Foster, Terrence Howard

HELL HATH NO GREATER FURY THAN A woman with a grudge: Radio host Erica Bain (Jodie Foster) sees her perfect world crumbling when, during a leisurely evening stroll with her boyfriend, Sam Mercer (Naveen Andrews), in New York's Central Park, they are attacked and brutally beaten by three thugs in a random act of violence.

JODIE/ F2

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tribute to APO HIKING SOCIETY
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and many more...!!!
Sept. 16 • Sun • 5pm

JCI-MANILA
Business opportunities
Community Development

"Training future leaders is a hard task, but Sun makes our job easier by keeping us all connected at 50% less the cost."

Junior Chamber International-Manila (Manila Jaycees) President, Louie Basilio

The country has changed a lot since the Manila Jaycees held its first organizational meeting sixty years ago. But its character has stayed consistent – it continues to be seen as a "University of Leaders", with its members as its students, leadership development as its curriculum and the world as its campus.

And Sun, of course, keeps them all together.

The Manila Jaycees was organized to help each member reach new heights in their respective careers and become leaders in their communities. Sun now helps them carry out their plans of success. With most members choosing Sun, communication is easier, faster and more convenient. Reminders regarding community development projects, skill development programs and seminars are easily circulated via text-messaging.

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Stars weigh in on the art of acting

By Nestor U. Torre

YOU WANT TO BE an actor, but don't know what it's all about? Let some vastly experienced thespians tell you all about it:

Laurence Olivier: What is acting but lying—and what is good acting but lying convincingly?

OLIVIER. "Good acting is lying convincingly."

Charlie Chaplin: Acting is timing! My mother gave me that, I was born with it. I don't think you can teach a person to act.

Isabelle Huppert: Acting is a way of living out one's insanity!

Animalistic

Clint Eastwood: Acting isn't an intellectual art at all. It's animalistic—it comes out of the animal part of the brain.

Paul Newman: Acting is like letting your pants down—you're exposed!

Rod Steiger: It sounds pompous, but it's the nearest I can get to being God. I'm trying to create human beings—and so does He!

Julie Christie: It's very self-indulgent. I get a walloping satisfaction out of it!

Bette Davis: Acting should be bigger than life. Scripts should be bigger than life. It should *all* be bigger than life!

Jane Fonda: Acting is frivolous, but frivolity is a big part of our society. So, we might as well relax and enjoy it!

Vanessa Redgrave: I give myself to my roles as a lover—it's the only way!

Sigourney Weaver: Some of the most intense relationships are between actors and the characters they play. There's a fire in the human spirit, and we jump into it with the same obsession we have for our lovers!

Kirk Douglas: Here I am, a grown man pretending to shoot it out with Burt Lancaster! It's a childish quality—something that most of us lose as we grow older.

Michael Douglas: It's so silly—I'm in my 40s now, playing make-believe.

Technique

William Hurt: You work hard for years to learn a technique—which you then should have the audacity to forget!

Cher: You don't have to be smart to act—look at Ronald Reagan, who even got to be president of the United States!

Glenda Jackson: You'd think it's something one would grow out of—but, you grow *into* it. The more you act, the more you realize how painfully easy it is to be lousy, and how very difficult it is to be good.

WEAVER. "Some of the most intense relationships are between actors and the characters they play."

Joanne Woodward: Acting is like sex—you should do it, not talk about it!

Jodie Foster's latest starrer...

From page F1

With her fiancé beaten to death, Erica is now consumed by fear and anxiety every time she walks the streets of "the safest big city in the world." She's paralyzed with fright even at the mere thought of leaving her house!

After she strikes an unlikely friendship with detective Sean Mercer (Terrence Howard) —who's investigating a series of vigilante-like murders—she tells him how crime and grief have irrevocable changed her.

Indeed, Erica's cheery outlook in life has turned grim: For her, the world has become a darker and more menacing place. —And the insensitive police are no help, either!

With great resolve, she decides to move on, but she buys herself a 9mm automatic weapon for protection—until she witnesses a violent shooting in a convenient store that forces her to use the gun she's just purchased! To her surprise, the incident empowers her—and things soon take a turn for the worse.

With a score to settle, she realizes how easy it is to take matters into her own hands—particularly when remorse doesn't get in the way.

Before long, she finds herself face-to-face again with Sam's remorseless killers. But, just how far can a person go to keep the wheels of justice spinning? And when is vengeance justified?

Despite some narrative implausibilities and an occasionally meandering exposition that stretches the movie unnecessarily, Neil Jordan ("The Crying Game," "Breakfast on Pluto") elevates the revenge-movie genre and turns his film's familiar story into a psychological thriller that examines the politics of guilt and the justice system in the context of one woman's fear and grief.

Foster inhabits her role with the tenacity, intensity and intelligence that served her well in films like "The Accused" and "The Silence of the Lambs."

Giving synergy to the actress' must-see thespic turn is the brilliant Howard ("Hustle and Flow"), who complements Foster with his textured portrayal of the world-weary cop who realizes that what's legal is not necessarily what's always right.

Together, they make a formidable acting tandem that spurs the film's engaging debate on justice dispensation, culpability and retribution.

Despite the movie's dark theme, it nevertheless ends on an inspiring note about friendship. Jordan subtly but powerfully establishes the inspiring relationship that binds Erica and Mercer together—they share the kind of friendship that's strong enough to heal broken hearts, and pure enough to restore Erica's faith in her fellowmen.

On the set...

From page F1

to look as battered as Iza's. "She's sweet, beautiful and smart!," Iza described Jamie.

The 25-year-old actress is enjoying her first time to be on her own. "In Manila, I'm always surrounded by people. I love talking to people, but I also like having all this time to think!"

What she misses most about Manila is having her own personal trainer. She goes to the gym in her Toronto apartment building. Iza's LA-based boyfriend, Jerry Garcia, who manages a rock band, has visited her here.

When we stepped out of her trailer, Iza introduced us to Paul Jones, the veteran make-up artist (Clive Owen's "Shoot 'Em Up") who created her heavily bruised look.

After finishing her scenes this week, Iza will fly back to Manila today (Saturday), to plunge right back into her busy TV schedule, and to begin a movie with Taiwanese actor *cum* pop star, Ken Zhu, which will be shot in Batanes.

The plot of the movie, to be directed by Adolfo Alix Jr., sounds interesting: A Taiwanese fisherman, washed ashore in Batanes, meets Iza and, despite not knowing each other's language, they fall in love.

Sweet smile

With a sweet smile, Iza bared, "I 'visualized' playing the role in 'The Echo.'" Despite the obstacles that seemed to initially block her chances of reprising her role, Iza believes that her positive outlook made it possible for her to finally make it to the Toronto set. She "visualized" the "Batanes" role, too.

"Now, I 'visualize' that I will be guesting on Oprah's show someday!," she mused. With her success rate at this unique practice, Iza just might be meeting Oprah soon!

Later, Iza gave us an update *via* e-mail about filming her most important scenes in "The Echo": "I was beaten up by a 6'6" guy (Kevin Durand) today. Our scene was so intense—I spent half the day crying! He's such a good actor; I love working with him. In real life, he's the opposite of his character. He's a sweet, gentle guy!"

(To be continued tomorrow)

E-mail rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com, and read his blog, "The Nepales Report," on www.inquirerbloggers.net/nepalesreport.

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R-13

UNDERDOG
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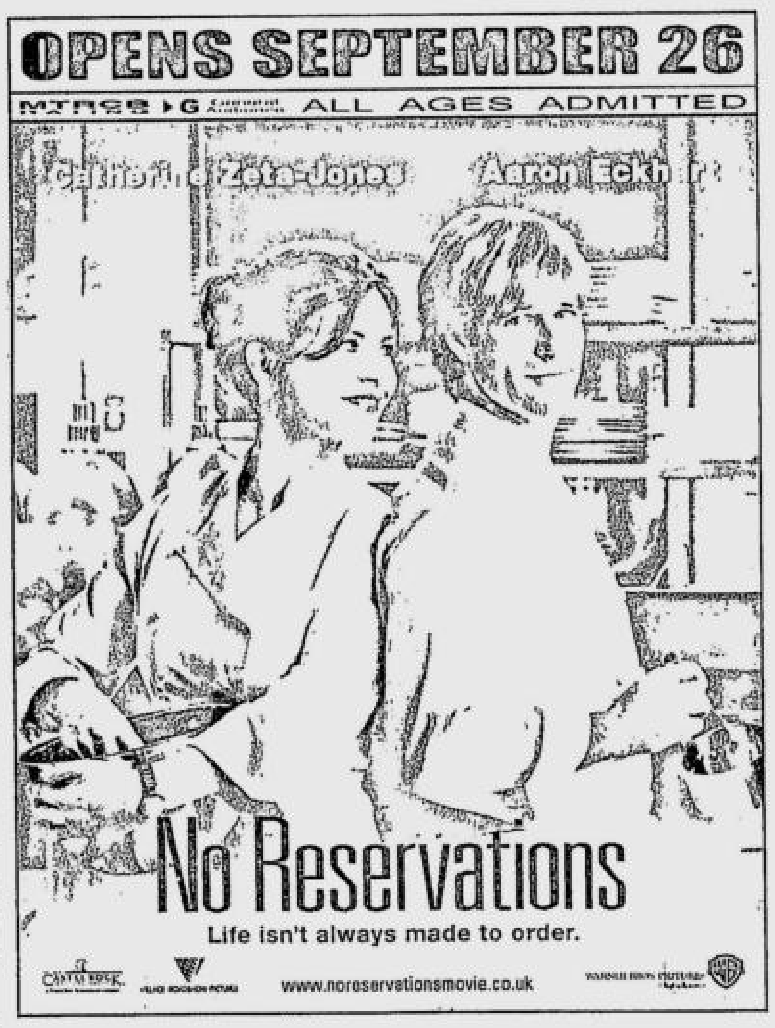
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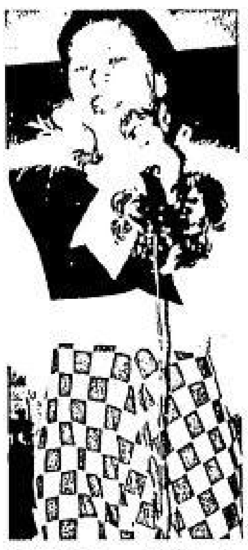
GABOR and Magsanoc (second and third from the left) blow their candles out as Ramos and Torrevillas look on.



TESSA sings "Like A Virgin."

Birthday gals

LAST MONDAY, ON HER DAY OFF, LETTY Jimenez-Magsanoc attended a special party to celebrate the birthdays of people born in September.

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

Guests began trickling in at the La Vigne Bistro on Yakal st. at 7 p.m. First to come was Rina Jimenez-David, followed by our host, wine queen Tita Trillo of Titania Wine Cellars, PDI founder Eugenia Duran-Apostol, Manila Bulletin's Deedee Siytangco and Ethel Timbol, Frank Evaristo, Philippine Star's Domini Torrevillas (with Saeed), and Beth Tagle (with her tenor son in tow).

Also present were PDI's Fe Zamora and Monica Feria, Gift Gate's Virgie Ramos and Girlie Rodis, and surprise guests Richard Merk, Dr. Rebecca B. Singson and Tessa Prieto-Valdes. They were our entertainers for the night.

Singson sang for Letty and Mina Gabor (both born on Sept. 13). Dennis Valdes belted "Bye Bye, Blackbeard," while Tessa brought the house down with her version of Madonna's "Like A Virgin."

The birthday ladies blew the candles on a peanut butter cake. Eggie Apostol did an easy number, Saeed sang for Domini, George Tagle entertained us with his operatic pieces, and Singson and Virgie sang duets with Richard. The party was a celebration of friendship—and a riot!

* * *

We're still asking for financial assistance to help Susan, 38, who's afflicted with stage three breast cancer. Deposit to Jesusa Paliza, BPI Pacific Star Branch S/A 3769024378. We need your help! *Call 899-1767.*

Eating...

From page F4

guests are taken aback, but my friend simply laughs it off.

I figured that my friends' food habits are actually good survival skills in the event of an energy crisis or disaster. We can forgo cooking and eat raw vegetables instead. But, we need not wait for a disaster to start eating raw, do we?

If you really want to go on a food adventure, try the *yacon*, which originates from South America. You can mix it with salads, or munch on it.

When you have your own garden, it's exciting to have kids around when harvesting *okra* or peanuts before eating them raw. At a young age, kids should develop an appreciation for natural food devoid of artificial flavorings. It's about time we learn to enjoy eating raw vegetables!

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ROGUE ASSASSIN R13 11:40,1:50,4:00, 6:10,8:20,10:30	NANCY DREW G 12:20,2:30,4:40, 6:50,9:00	THE BRAVE ONE R13 12:30,3:00,5:30, 8:00,10:30

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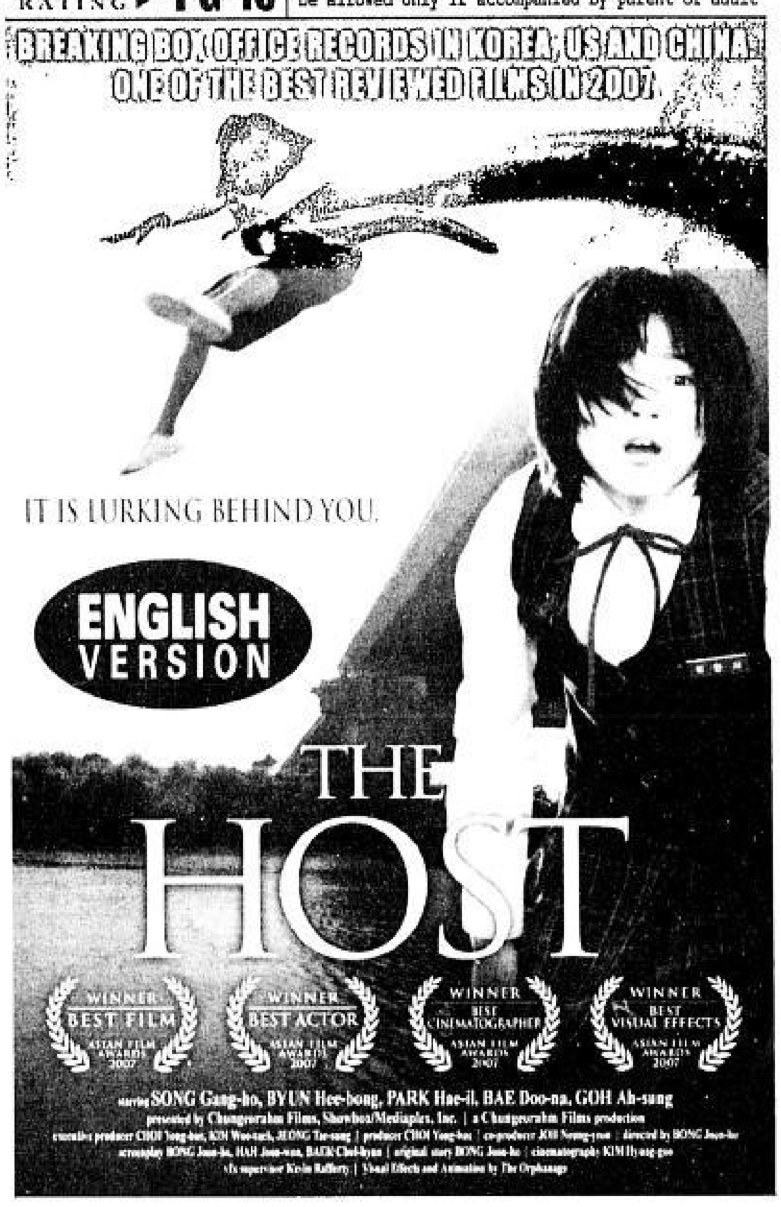
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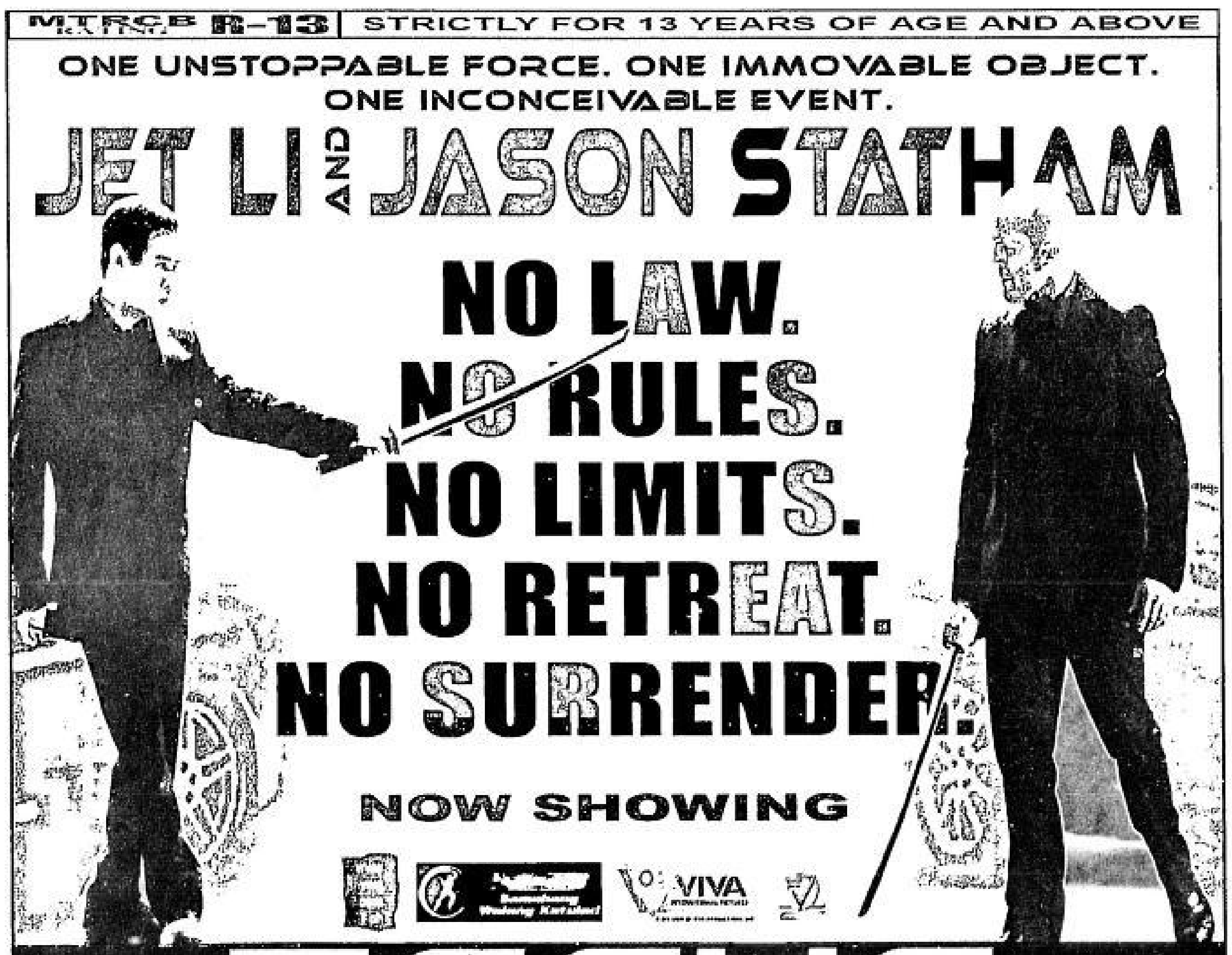
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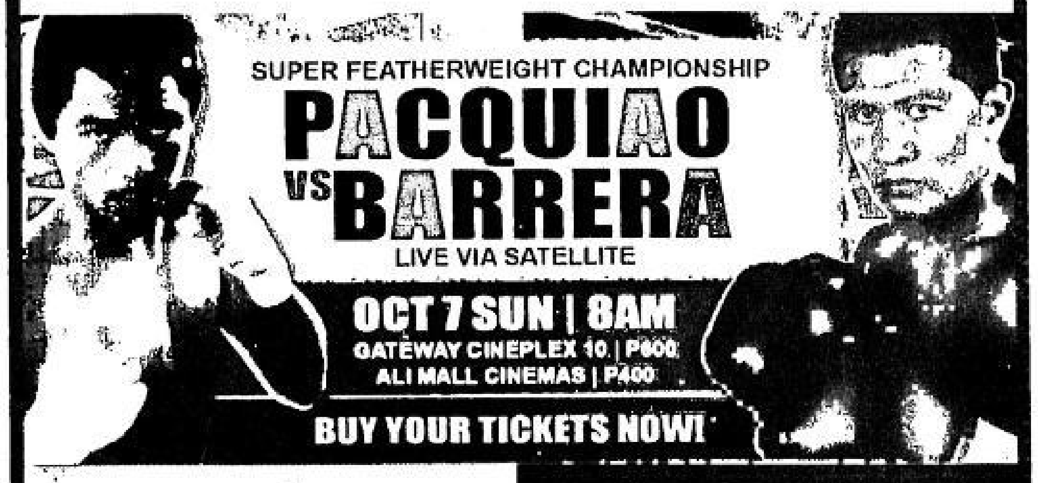
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1408 2:30 / 7:10	UNDERDOG 1:40/3:40/5:40/7:40/9:40	I KNOW WHO KILLED ME 12:10/2:30/4:50/7:10/9:30	
NANCY DREW 2:55 / 7:30	DISTURBIA 12:10/4:50/9:30	A LOVE STORY 1:40/4:20/7:00/9:40	THE BRAVE ONE 1:00/3:40/6:20/9:00

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DIRECTOR'S CUT

'Chopsuey' is a dream come true for Cathy Camarillo

By Ronald G. Mangubat

CAMARILLO (RIGHT). Directs Piolo in his first indie film.

FIRST-TIME DIRECTOR CATHY Camarillo's "Chopsuey," her first full-length digital film, was finally shown in theaters recently. "I didn't imagine it to be like this," she declares nervously. "I've been in the industry for a decade now, but nothing prepared me for this!"

Since 1997, Camarillo, a UP Journalism graduate, has been an assistant director to a lot of mainstream filmmakers like Laurice Guillen ("Tanging Yaman") and Joyce Bernal ("Tanging Ina," "Don't Give Up on Us"). But, the 35-year-old director silently nurtured a dream of making her own full-length film one day. In fact, she verbalized this to her friend, Piolo Pascual, during the shooting breaks of "Till There Was You."

Promise

Camarillo recalls: "I told Piolo I wanted to direct my own film, and he said: 'Why not? I promise to support you!' So, the moment I was offered to direct 'Chopsuey,' I already had Piolo in mind!"

"Chopsuey," a quiet but searing family drama that tackles depression, took one year to prepare—and 10 days to shoot! Excerpts from our interview:

Have you always wanted to become a film director?

Not really. When I was a child, I wanted to become a newscaster or a journalist. That's why I took up journalism at UP. I tried working in a news program on TV, but the experience was very taxing and the work schedule was taking its toll on my marriage.

Taxing field

But, you still ended up in a similarly taxing field—filmmaking...

By then, I already knew how to prioritize things. I have learned to enjoy my job.

Why did you choose depression as the subject of your first film?

Because it's a complex issue, one that's largely misunderstood. The movie is not really a serious study on depression—it's more about how a family gets closer when their eldest brother becomes chronically depressed.

How is this different from other films that have tackled the lives of Chinese-Filipinos?

It's quieter and plotless, in a sense, but the characters stand out. We also decided not to let the actors speak in Chinese anymore.

Message

What is your message then?

There's a line in the book, "Tuesdays with Morrie," that goes: "Life is a series of pushes and pulls. You want to do something, but you're bound to do something else." It's called tension of the opposites—like pulling a rubber band. And, most of us live somewhere in the middle. Love wins—that's what I want to impart!

How were you able to convince Piolo to portray the depressive protagonist?

We're close, so it was easy. *At saka,* he gave me his word that he would appear in my very first film.

Was it difficult to direct a close friend?

Yes! I told Piolo I couldn't pamper him. I said, "Please, help me. I have 10 days to finish principal photography, and I need to shoot 17 sequences every day!" He was supportive and professional.

How was it like directing your first film?

Scary but fulfilling—*ganoon pala ang pakiramdam! Kasi,* when I was just an assistant director, I had my own interpretation of a scene. Sometimes, I would share it with my directors, but, the final decision was still theirs.

What kind of film would you like to do next?

I'd like to do a romantic drama, something in the mold of "Unfaithful." As a woman, I have a lot of experiences when it comes to love, and I want to share them. There are many lessons that can be drawn from those experiences! *(Laughs)*

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Arevalo is all praises for digital features

By Remy M. Umerez

AREVALO. "Moviegoers are warming up to digital movies."

THE ACTOR BEHIND THE VOICE-over of "Sulong," the current cinema ad of the Philippine Veterans Bank, is Robert Arevalo. We talked to the actor briefly during the ad's launch at Greenbelt 3's My Cinema, Greenbelt 3. He was there with wife Barbara Perez, who was excited, because their grandchild has a walk-on part in the ad.

"Sulong" makes use of the country's heritage and rich history as it recognizes the bank's relevance to the veterans of World War II. Robert's narration is brief, but it carries a firm message that encourages the modern-day Filipino to move forward—or "Sulong, Pilipino!"

Popular couple

When the subject of indie filmmaking was raised, the popular couple shared their experiences in the recent Cinemalaya movie, "Gulong." Barbara says it was her daughter who convinced her to do the film. She relates: "She vouched for the skill of the director, Sockie Fernandez, whose work in commercials she had seen. *Ako naman*, I thought that if I wanted to make a comeback, I wanted it to be in a mainstream film.

"But, I took my daughter's word and, to my delight, I fell in love with the script—*ang ganda*! It inspired me! When it was time to shoot my scenes in Pila, Laguna, I knew my lines by heart—and I was there an hour early! The late Doc Perez really instilled in me the importance of discipline. 'Gulong' was a new experience for me—and a labor of love!"

Budget

Robert adds, "Indie producers work on a very tight budget, yet they manage to come up with worthy projects! Can you imagine what they'll come up with if they have the budget of a mainstream movie? The important thing is, the market of indie films is growing, and moviegoers who normally shy away from them are warming up to them. And they're getting critical acclaim in film festivals around the world. Sooner or later, *makakasanayan ding panoorin ng mga tao ang ganitong klaseng pelikula.*"

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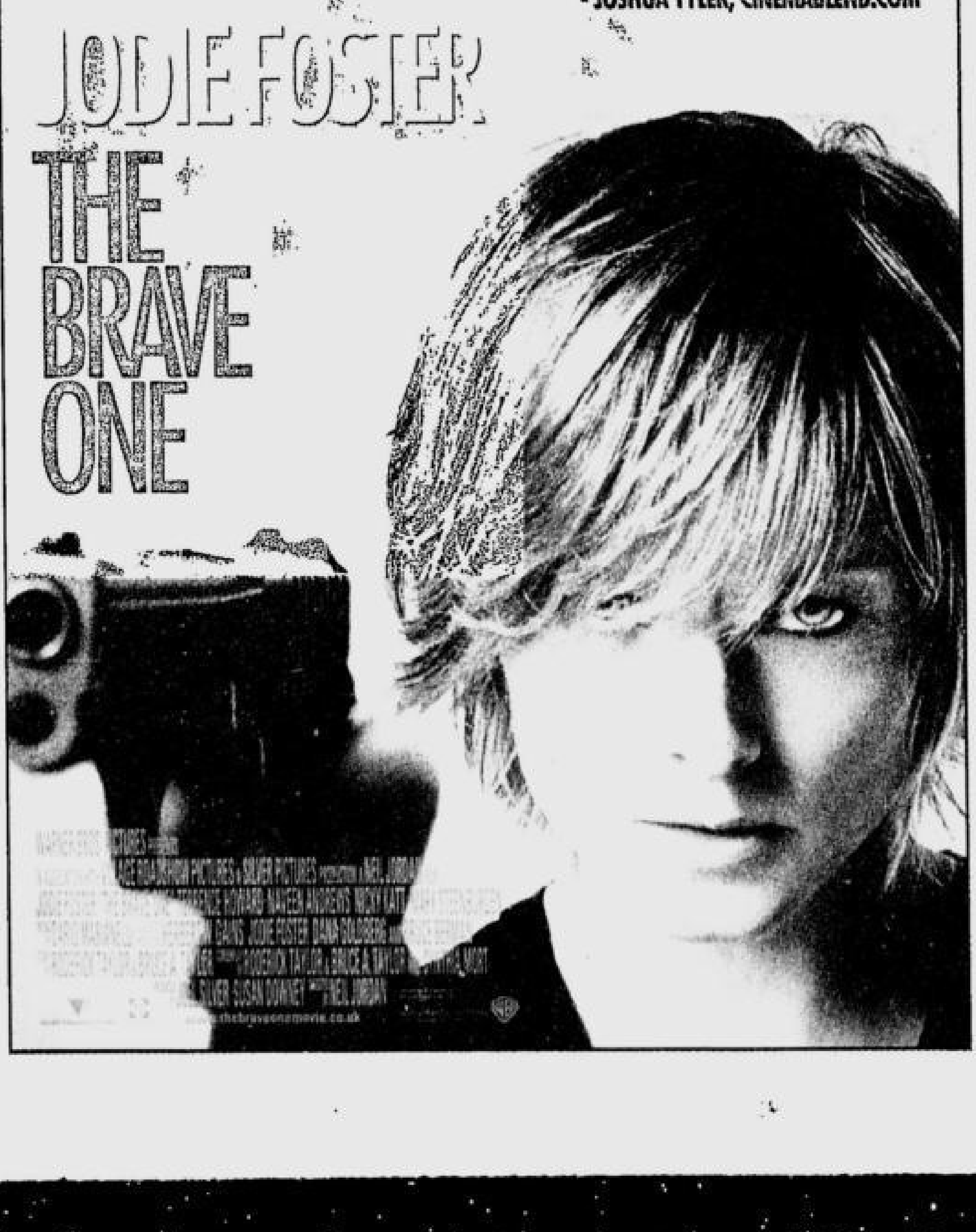

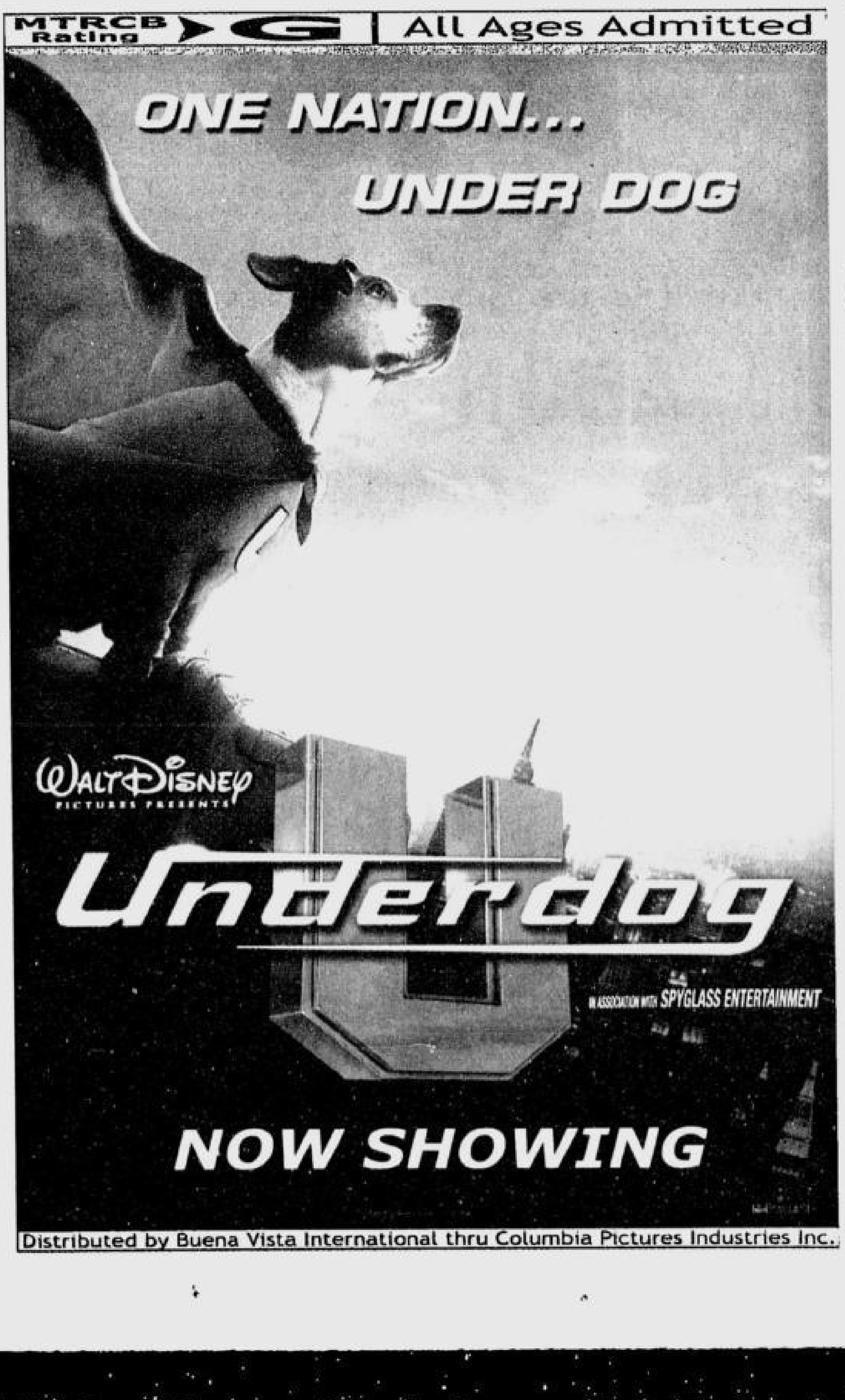
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LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bismark

Eating raw veggies

AFTER A CHINESE friend told us that she eats a lot of raw vegetables, she peeled off a sweet potato and ate it in front of us. She invited us to taste it, so we did. We had no regrets, because it tasted good—it was crunchy and flavorful!

Menu

She likes to munch on raw *ampalaya* (bitter gourd). She also prepared raw potato strips, salted and rinsed. Then, she sautéed some garlic and onions, again adding potatoes to the menu.

Another friend brings guests to his garden in Baguio, where he singles out the *sayote* (choko), grabs a young fruit, and bites into it. His

EATING/F3

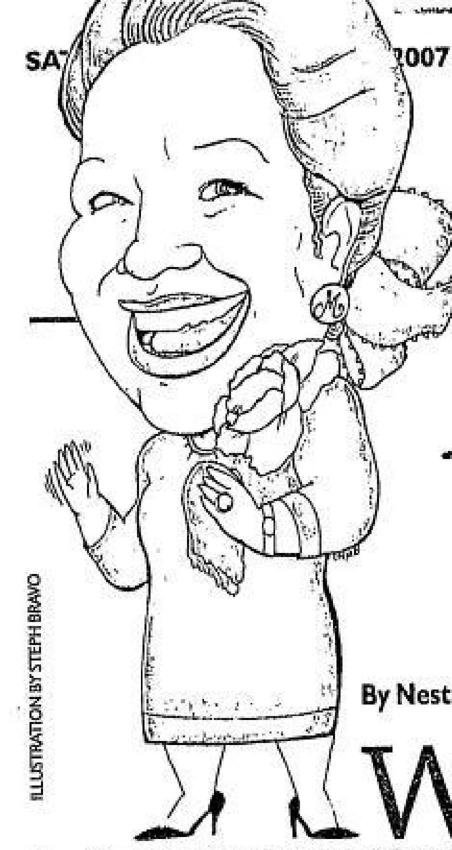

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

SATURDAY *Special*

Manay Ichu honored for her many contributions to Filipino movies

By Nestor U. Torre

WE JOIN MANY OTHer film workers and buffs in congratulating Marichu Vera-Perez Maceda for being cited as the recipient of the Natatanging Gawad Urian of the Manunuri ng Pelikulang Pilipino. This signal honor is a well-deserved recognition of the many contributions that "Manay Ichu" has made to Philippine movies—not only as producer, but also as indefatigable industry leader.

We worked with *Manay* Ichu when she and Eddie Romero were co-secretaries general of the Film Academy of the Philippines, and they tapped us to chair the pioneering Film Academy Classification Board, which set out to prove that film people were capable of regulating themselves—and didn't need a Board of Censors to do it for them!

Culture of censorship

The Academy's move was both daring and visionary, because it flew in the face of the culture of censorship that film people saw as an affront to and curtailment of artistic freedom, and yet was favored by the Marcos regime as a way of controlling potentially excessive and "subversive" cinematic expression.

But, *Manay* Ichu and Eddie utilized the Film Academy Classification Board so convincingly that even Marcos saw the light, and he opted to create the transition Movie and Television Classification Board to replace the Board of Censors.

Fifteen movie industry people were appointed to the MTRCB, and they proved that film artists were indeed capable of responsibly regulating themselves. This radical shift in the government's view was regarded as a major triumph for the Filipino movie industry.

As we continued to work with *Manay* Ichu, we got to know her better as a friend, and we liked what we discovered. She was warm, loving, frank, loyal, committed, and a great conversationalist and raconteur. In fact, it was with Marichu that we held our longest conversation ever—it lasted through the night, for a full eight hours!

Educational programs

But *Manay* Ichu is even more action than talk-oriented. When she and Cirio Santiago headed the Film Development Council of the Philippines, she initiated a number of educational programs and competitions to discover, develop and upgrade film talents.

We worked with her on the council's annual screenwriting workshops and national scriptwriting competitions, which boosted the careers of many major talents.

Our most recent collaboration with *Manay* Ichu was on the forthcoming book on the history and significance of Sampaguita Pictures, which we wrote and Manay is currently editing for publication next year.

As we interviewed Manay Ichu for the book, we felt her deep love for the Filipino movie industry, to which her family has devoted the best years of its collective life.

Aside from these personal involvements and associations, we've also seen Marichu

MANAY/ H2

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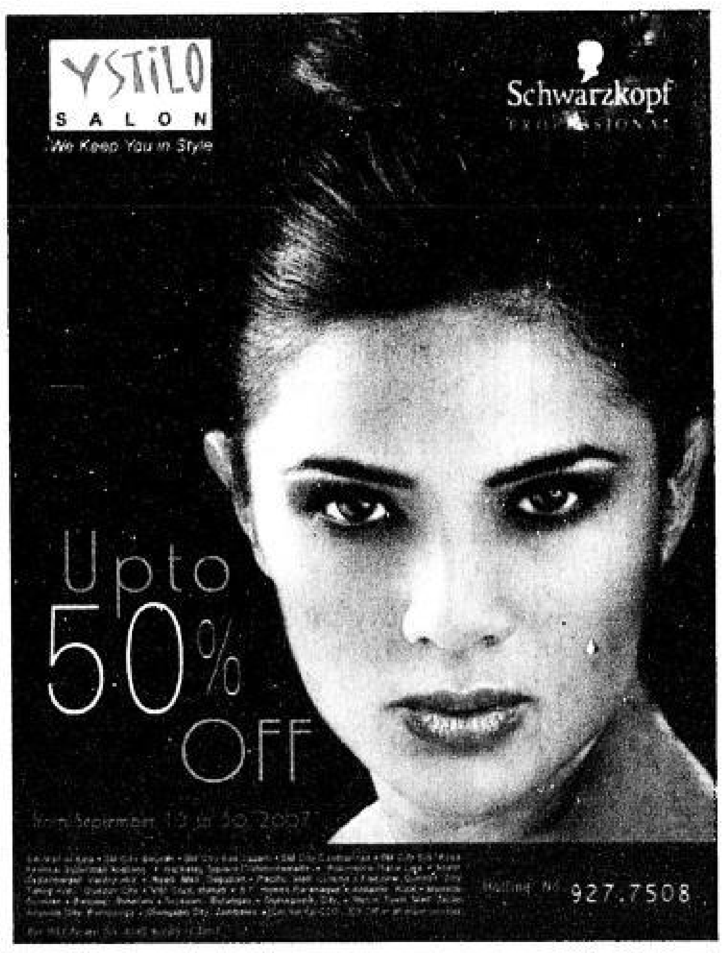

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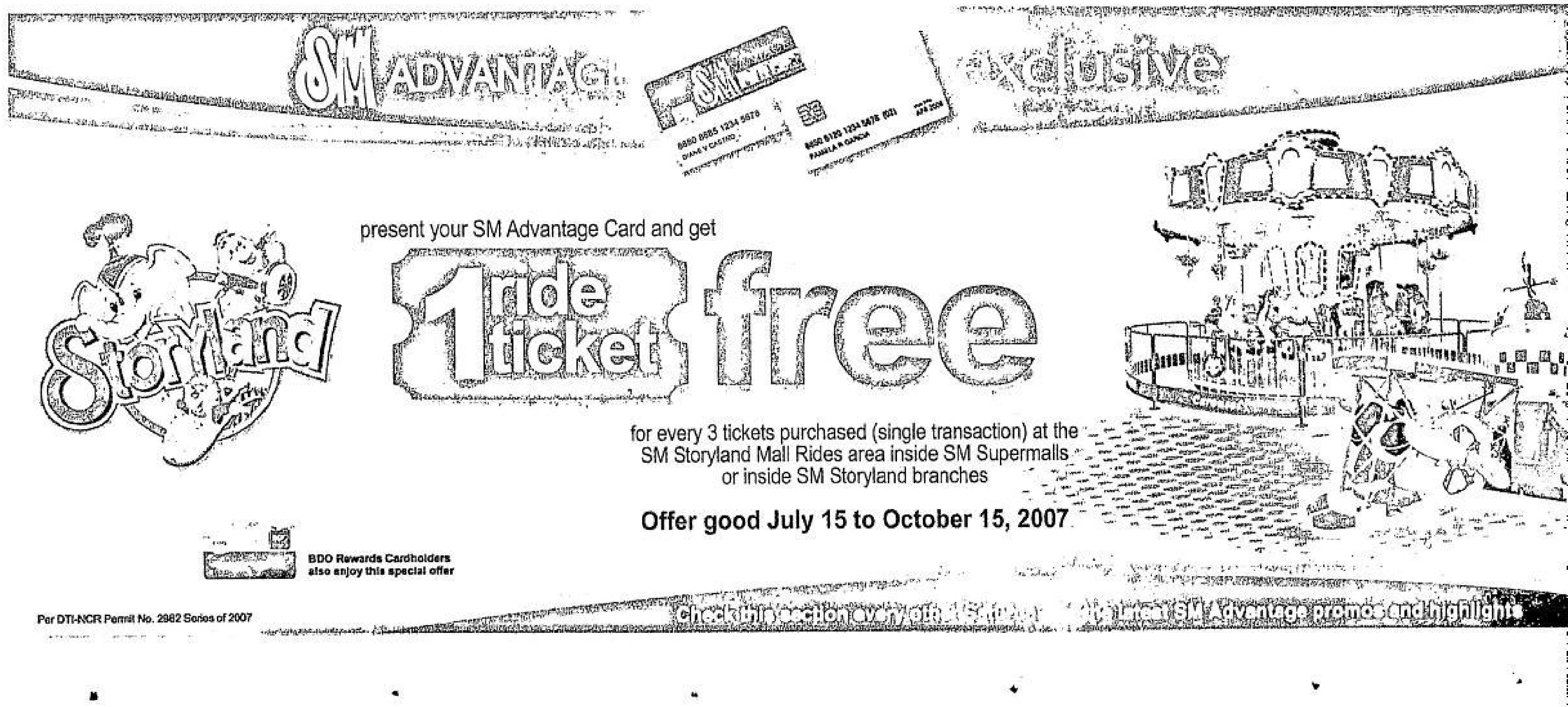

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Reintroducing Eugene Domingo, dramatic actress

AFTER SOME OF THE FUNNIEST comic roles in films and on TV in recent years, character actress Eugene Domingo has established herself as a bankable comedienne. Unknown to many, however, she started as a dramatic actress in Dulaang UP's theater productions.

In Brillante Mendoza's critically-acclaimed drama, "Foster Child," which started its commercial run last Sept. 12, the public will have a glimpse of Eugene as a dramatic actress: She plays Bianca, a social worker who deals with foster parents and children in the slums.

Though she has some comic lines in the movie, Eugene's role is nevertheless a big departure from her current acting assignments, allowing her to display her thespic range.

DOMINGO. Cut her thespic teeth in the theater.

Decision

Eugene says she took part in the Seiko Films project because of her immense love for acting. Happily, her decision has paid off, because she has been praised for her performance in the film.

She muses: "It's an honor to be in a film that had its world premiere at the Cannes Film Festival. Prior to the shooting, we interviewed real foster mothers, which turned out to be an invaluable learning exercise! I pray that the Filipino audience will appreciate our movie!"

"Foster Child" depicts the emotional struggle of Thelma (Cherry Pie Picache), a foster mother from the slums who receives a meager monthly stipend for taking care of her foster child. Picache was named best actress at the Ninth Osian's Cinefan Festival in India for her powerful performance in the film.

''Wag Kang . . .

From page H6

actress Lily Chu. Call Glynnis or Bing Valbuena at (035) 422-6002 loc. 354 or 520.

Screenwriting workshop

Only 20 participants will be mentored by the esteemed Clodualdo "Doy" del Mundo in his first screenwriting workshop organized by Siklab Filmmakers beginning Sept. 21 at The Garage, Ateneo de Manila University. Log on to siklab.org@gmail.com.

Movies on TV

On HBO today at 3 p.m., "Pride and Prejudice." Tomorrow at 7 p.m., "Steel Magnolias." Sept. 17, "Crossing Delancey." Sept. 18 at 7:45 a.m., "Selena." Sept. 20 at 8 a.m., "Lords of Dogtown." Sept. 21 at 11 p.m., "Freedomland."

'Joshua'

Also opening on Sept. 19 is the thriller, "Joshua," exclusively at Ayala cinemas. The Sam Rockwell starrer is about a "perfect" couple that unravels into chaos, seemingly driven to madness by the darkness within their 9-year-old son.

'The Host'

The multiawarded Korean blockbuster, "The Host," will start its Philippine theater run on Sept. 19. Bong Joon-Ho's film is about toxic chemicals that find their way into the Han River, where a monster is spawned that wreaks havoc on Korea's capital city, Seoul.

Exquizyth dance group

General Santos City-based hip hop dance group, Exquizyth, will vie for the grand

'WAG KANG/ H3

Manay Ichu...

From page H1

at work in the lives of others. A major star reveals that *Manay* was one of the few movie people who helped her recover from crippling financial difficulties.

And *Manay* bankrolled, at great risk to her own finances, "uncommercial" productions like "Batch '81," which is still regarded as one of the most significant Filipino movies ever made.

Main focus

These days, *Manay* self-effacingly says that her main focus is on being the best grandmother to her sons' burgeoning bevy of babies. We trust, however, that her Natatanging Urian award will fire her resolve anew and motivate her to produce movies again.

Our dream is that the Vera-Perezes' revered Sampaguita Pictures will return to film production next year, to add its experience and abiding love for movies to the dynamic ferment of activity that is once more beginning to reinvigorate the "never-say-die" Filipino movie industry.

If Marichu shares that dream, it can happen. With "child of the movies" Marichu Vera-Perez Maceda, anything is doable. —Right, *Manay?*

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10 RUSH HOUR - 3 / SKINWALKERS

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2 MALAGKIT
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4 LAST LEGION
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2 THE INVASION
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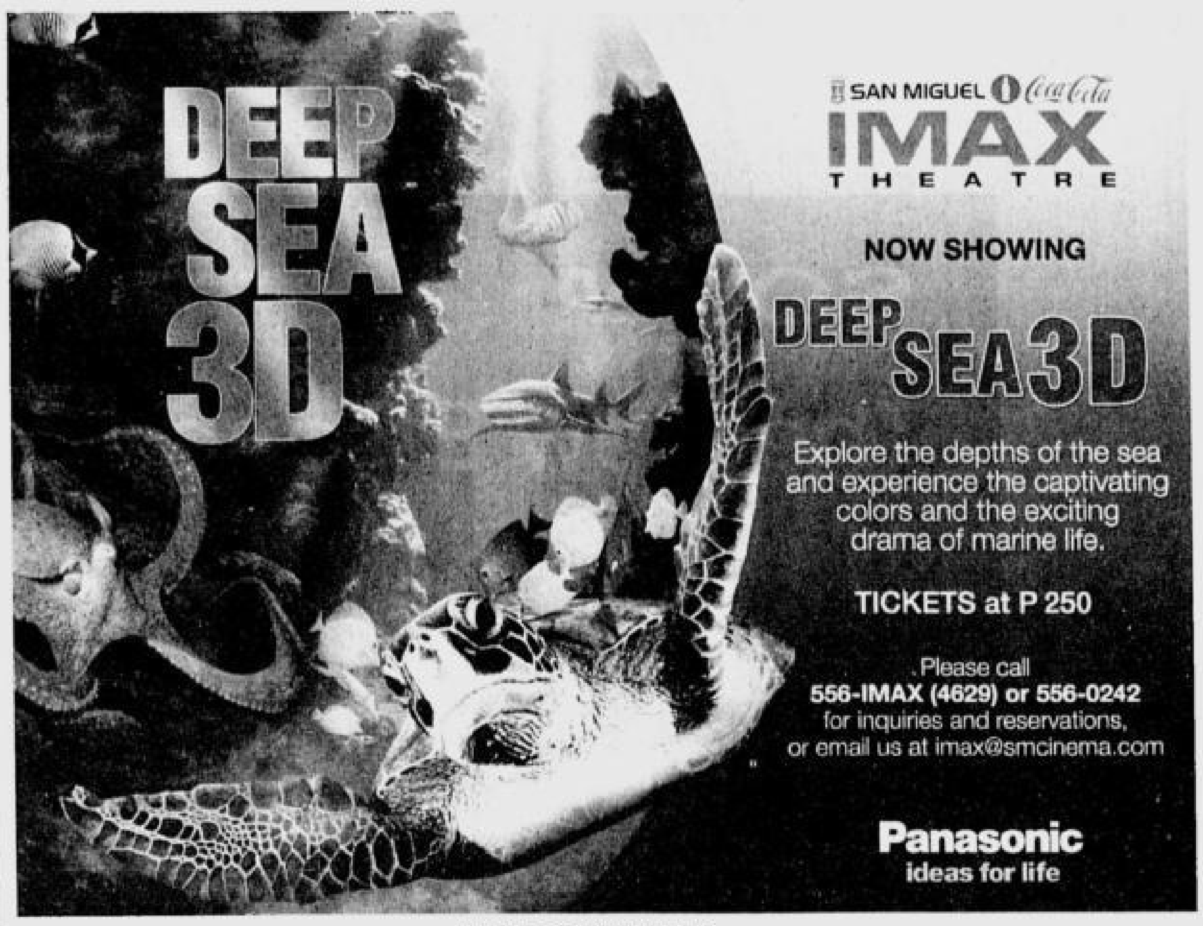

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7 ROGUE ASSASSIN
8 A LOVE STORY
9 SKINWALKERS
10 DAYWATCH/RUSH HOUR 3
11 UNDERDOG
12 CARTOON NETWORK

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1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 THE BRAVE ONE
3 UNDERDOG
4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
5 1408
6 SKINWALKERS
7 DISTURBIA
8 ANINO NG SETYEMBRE/CARTOON NETWORK
9 A LOVE STORY
10 RUSH HOUR 3

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
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2 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
3 1408
4 A LOVE STORY/CARTOON NETWORK
5 THE BRAVE ONE
5 UNDERDOG

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2 UNDERDOG
3 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
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2 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
3 GANDHI, MY FATHER/CARTOON NETWORK
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Chance encounter with Luciano Pavarotti

PAVAROTTI. Late, great classicial singer gave Filipinos a once-in-a-lifetime musical treat.

By Behn Cervantes

OF COURSE, MS BABY ARENAS HAS more stories about the late, great operatic tenor, Luciano Pavarotti. After all, she brought the singing idol to the country despite the legendary star's busy schedule.

Baby generously set up giant screens outside the concert venue so Manila's *hoi polloi* could also partake of the once-in-a-lifetime musical treat!

At the time, I was residing in Manhattan. One morning, there was an announcement on TV that Pavarotti was going to sign autographs in a bookstore downtown.

I bathed and dressed quickly—and got to the venue five minutes before the appointed hour! Soon, a stretched limo arrived, and out lumbered the overweight tenor!

Eager crowd

He needed the help of his aide—and his cane—as he walked slowly into the building. His aide asked the eager crowd not to bother the star. A tall, blond guy extended his book, nevertheless, but somebody told him, "Stop!" He did.

Fortunately, ordinary mortals were allowed in. I made myself comfortable, read an old newspaper, and observed how the tall blond was still at it. He talked about the records, books and photos he had of Pavarotti.

He finally found an equally talkative grandma who related her own love for the tenor. The blond guy announced that he only wanted Pavarotti's autograph on his music book! I decided to claim my place in front of the door, should the tenor suddenly leave. After an hour, the tenor did decide to make an unannounced exit.

Cologne

Pavarotti walked by so close to me that I could smell his cologne. Indeed, he was large! He had difficulty walking to and entering the limo. Alas, the chattering duo caught only Pavarotti's rear as he entered his car.

As the limo drove away, they realized their loss and rued, oh-so-loudly, Manhattan-style—complete with the slapping of the forehead. I merely shrugged my *Pinoy* shoulders!

''Wag...

From page H2

prize in the dance-reality TV show, "You Can Dance Version 2.0." Exquizyth made it through the highly competitive weekly finals in July and monthly finals last month.

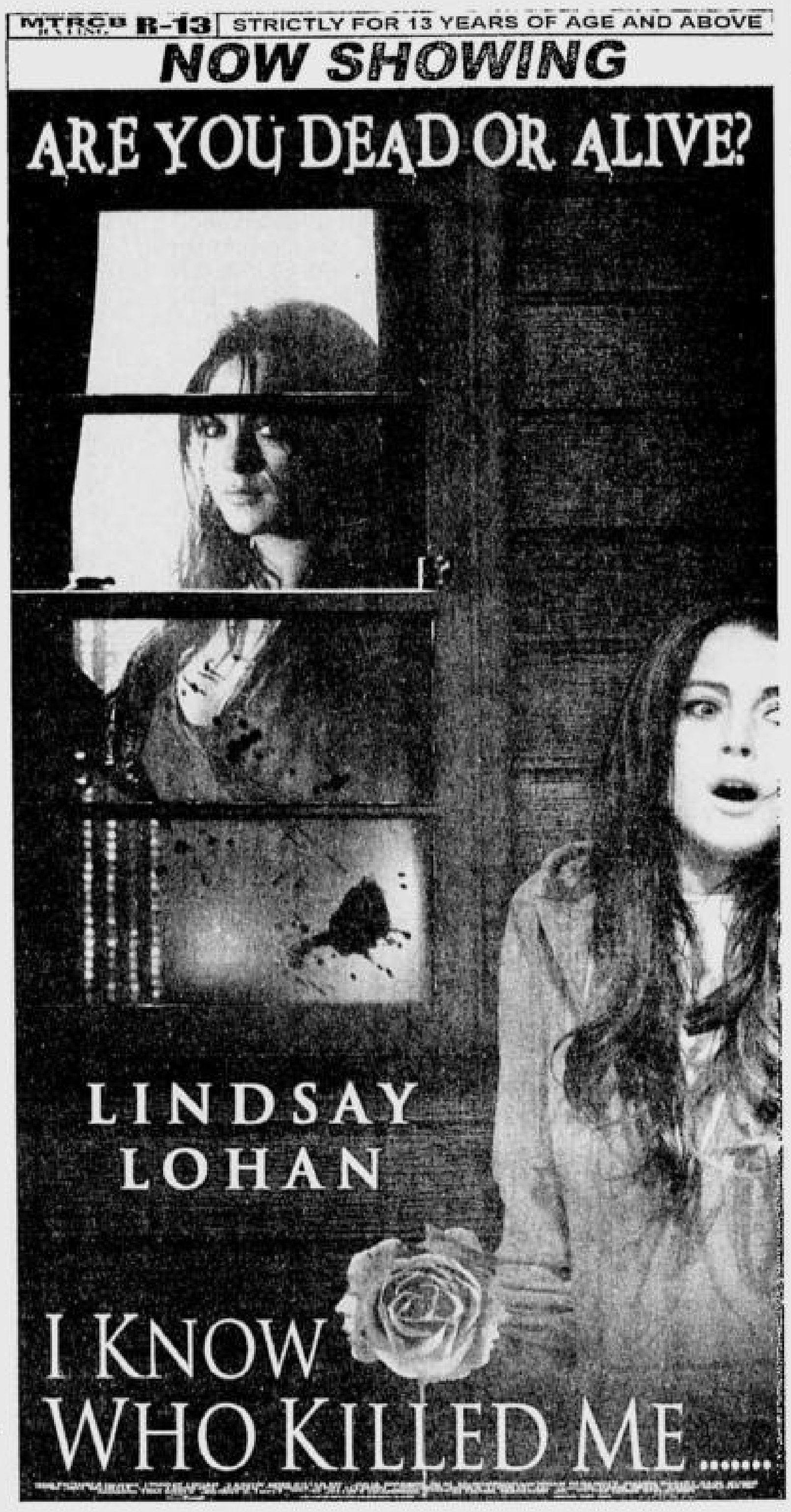
Album mall shows

Today: Sam Concepcion at SM The Block at 5 p.m. Shamrock's "Barkada" at SM San Lazaro. Tomorrow: The "Kami nAPO Muna Ulit" album at SM North Edsa.

Roanne Mallari

Gifted teen talent, Roanne Mallari, plays the lead role of Alice in the musical, "Quiapo," currently being performed at the UP Theater until Sept. 21. Roanne has been singing since childhood, played the lead in "Once on This Island," and has guested in many mall shows. The three-act musical is written by Dennis Marasigan, with music by Jesse Lucas and direction by Frederick Castro. Call 735-5471 loc. 441.

MALLARI. Topbills stage musical, "Quiapo."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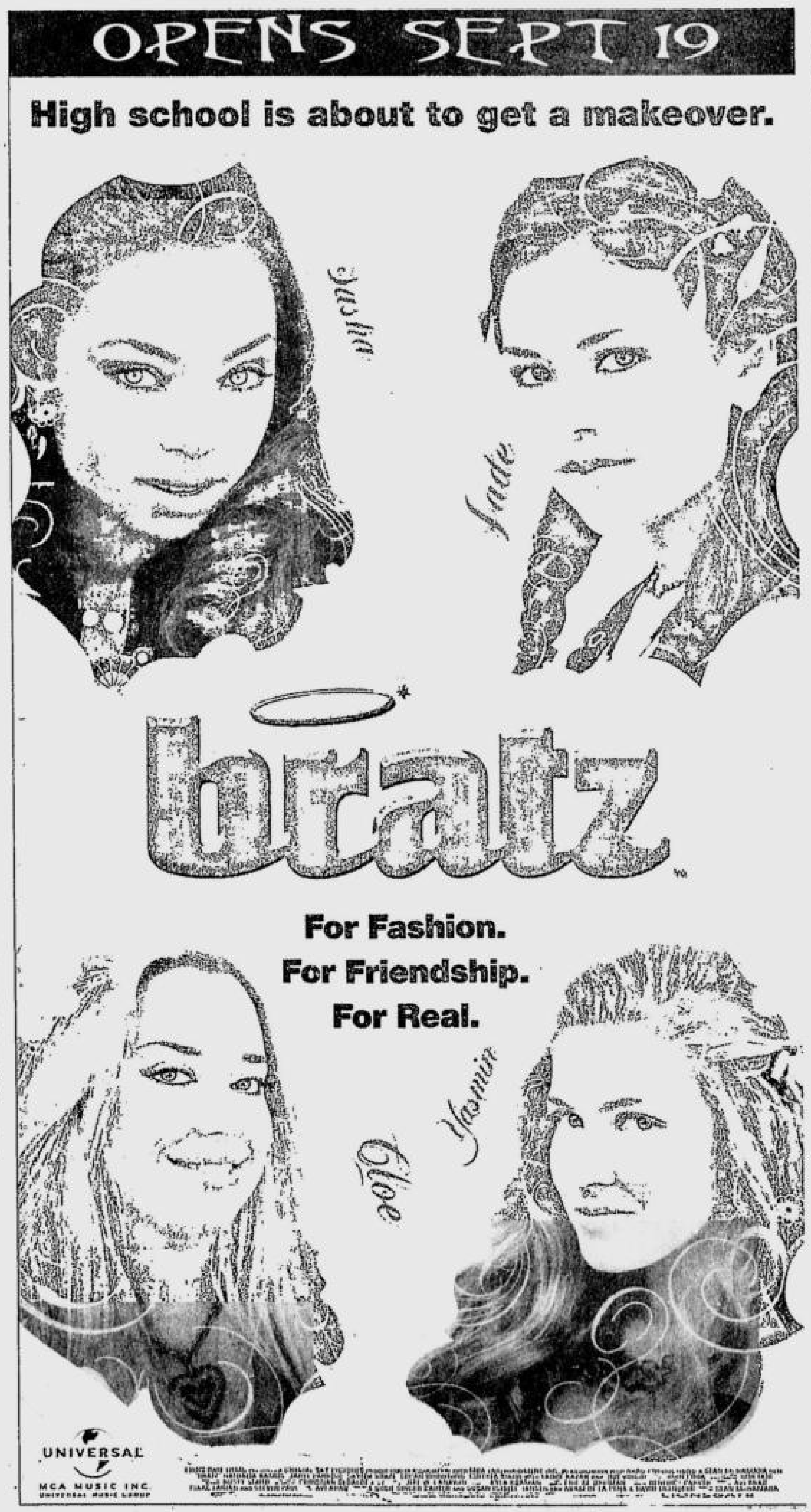
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6 ROGUE ASSASSIN
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
2 THE BRAVE ONE
11:05 1:50 4:35 7:20 10:00
7 FOSTER CHILD
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00
3 indieSine: LIGAW LIHAM
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00
8 DAYWATCH 12:30 3:05
NANCY DREW 5:40 7:40 9:40
4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
9 EVAN ALMIGHTY
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00
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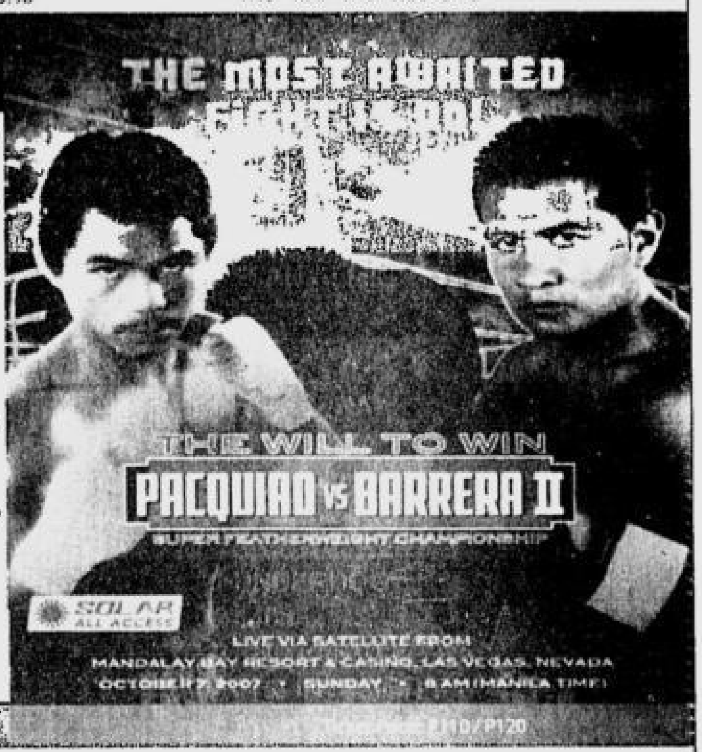
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SUPER FEATHERWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP
SOLAR ALL ACCESS
LIVE VIA SATELLITE FROM
MANDALAY BAY RESORT & CASINO, LAS VEGAS, NEVADA
OCTOBER 7, 2007 • SUNDAY • 8 AM (MANILA TIME)

ERMITA P110/P120

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
12:30 2:50 5:10 [illegible] 10:00
2 FOSTER CHILD
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00
5 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
12:30 [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] 10:00
3 UNDERDOG
12:25 2:25 4:25 6:25 8:25 10:00
6 THE BRAVE ONE
12:35 3:00 [illegible] 7:45 10:00
4 DISTURBIA
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:25 10:00
7 SKINWALKERS / 1408
12:00 2:00 4:00 / 6:00 8:00 10:00

DRESS 'EM UP UNDERDOG STYLE
Bring your cute pet dogs in a superhero costume and get special prizes.
*Registration Forms are now available at all Handyman Do-it-Best Home Center Outlets

Bow Wow FUN SHOW
BOW WOW Fun Show is on SEPT. 15 (Saturday) • 2PM
Orosa Atrium, Robinsons Place, Manila
NOW SHOWING
MTRCB Rating: G

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8196

1 DAY WATCH
12:45 3:30 6:15 9:00
5 SKIN WALKERS / RUSH HOUR 3
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00
2 UNDERDOG
12:30 2:40 4:50 7:00 9:10
6 DISTURBIA
12:30 2:40 4:50 6:50 9:00
3 THE BRAVE ONE
12:45 3:30 6:15 9:00
7 ROGUE ASSASSIN
11:10 1:40 4:10 6:40 9:10
4 1408
11:20 1:40 4:00 6:30 9:00
8 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
11:10 1:40 4:10 6:40 9:10

NOVALICHES 935-3229-30

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 UNDERDOG
3 THE BRAVE ONE
4 DAYWATCH

PIONEER 687-6378

1 ROGUE ASSASSIIN
1:10 3:35 6:00 8:25
2 UNDERDOG
12:25 2:30 4:35 6:40 8:40
3 THE BRAVE ONE
12:30 3:05 5:40 8:15
4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
1:30 [illegible] [illegible] 8:30

STA. ROSA Ticket Price: P80/P90 (049) 837-0907

1 THE LAST LEGION / SIGNOS
2 UNDERDOG
3 SINKING Of JAPAN
4 THE BRAVE ONE

LIPA Ticket Price: (043) 757-3664 P90 (043) 312-5870

1 UNDERDOG
2 THE INVASION
3 THE LAST LEGION
4 RUSH HOUR 3

DASMARIÑAS Ticket Price: P80 / P90 (046) 416-4332

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 UNDERDOG
3 SIGNOS
4 DAYWATCH

IMUS P100 (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-6188

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 UNDERDOG
3 THE BRAVE ONE
4 DAYWATCH

ANGELES Ticket Price: P90 (045) 892-2346

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 UNDERDOG
3 HAIRSPRAY
4 DISTURBIA

TARLAC

1 SINKING of JAPAN
2 A LOVE STORY
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY

STARMILLS P80 / P90 (045) 875-1927

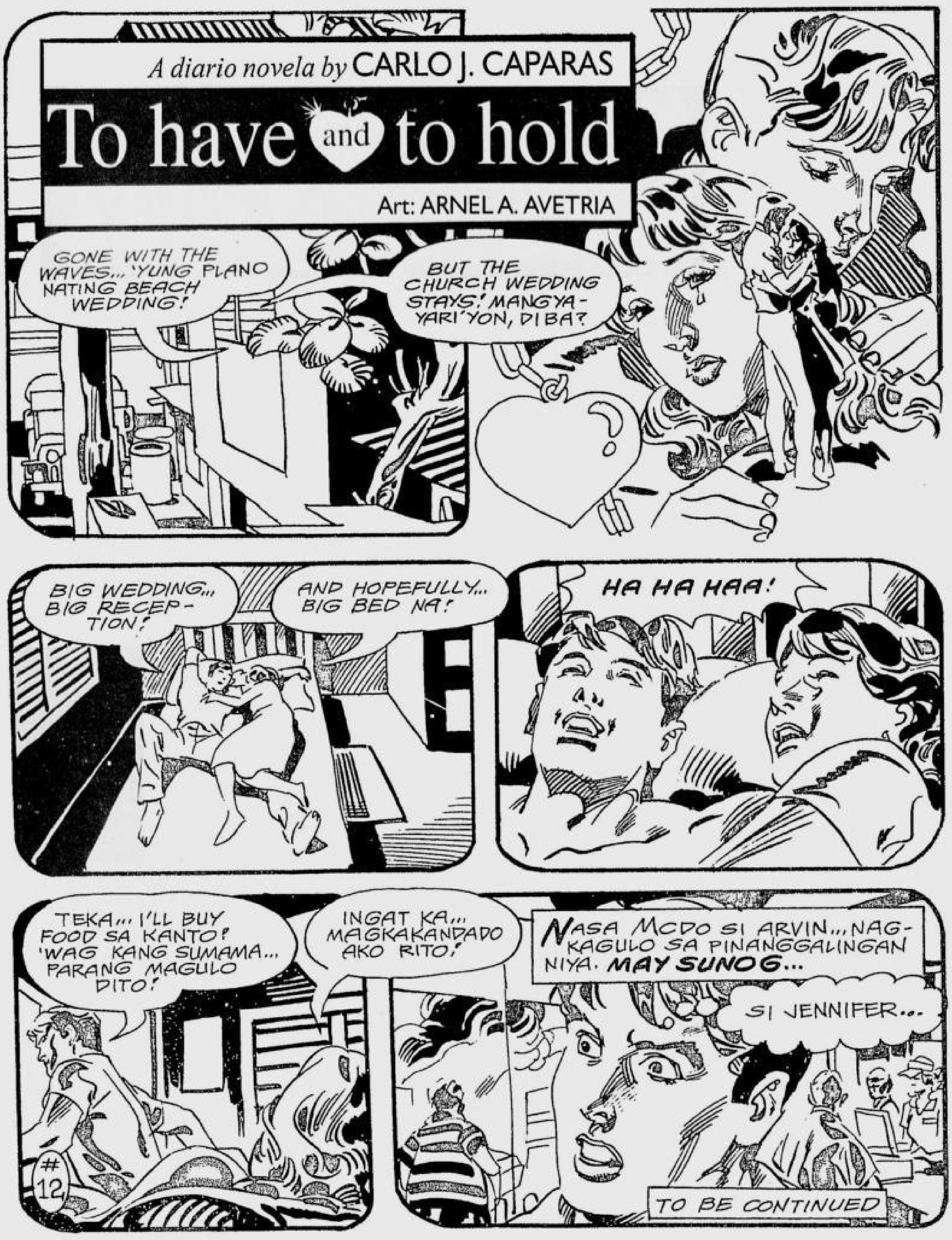
1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 UNDERDOG
3 SIGNOS
4 HAIRSPRAY
5 DISTURBIA
6 RUSH HOUR 3

BACOLOD Ticket Price: P70 (034) 441-0459

1 UNDERDOG
2 1408
3 THE INVASION
4 SINKING of JAPAN
5 PLANET TERROR
6 SIGNOS

ILOILO Ticket Price: P70.50 / P80.50 (033) 336-8070

1 UNDERDOG
2 1408
3 THE LAST LEGION
4 THE INVASION
5 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
6 SIGNOS


A diario novela by CARLO J. CAPARAS

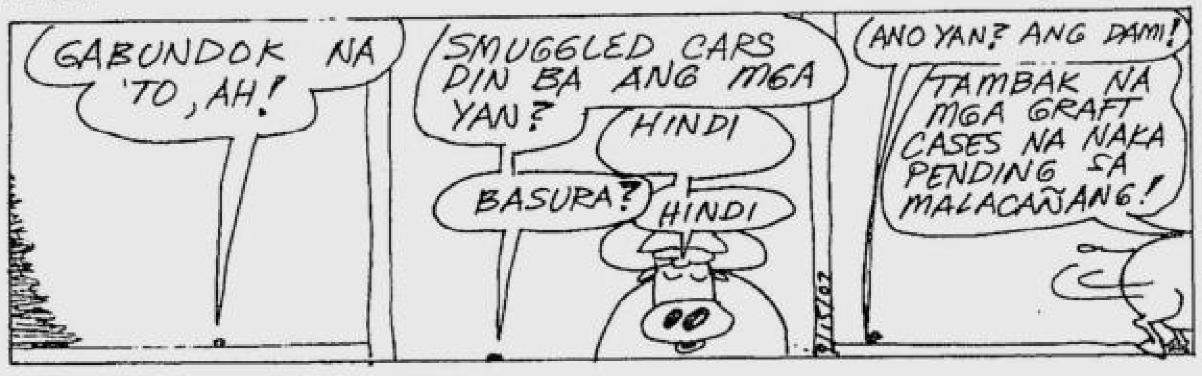
To have and to hold

Art: ARNEL A. AVETRIA

GONE WITH THE WAVES... 'YUNG PLANO NATING BEACH WEDDING!
BUT THE CHURCH WEDDING STAYS! MANGYA-YARI 'YON, DI BA?
BIG WEDDING... BIG RECEP-TION!
AND HOPEFULLY... BIG BED NA!
HA HA HAA!
TEKA... I'LL BUY FOOD SA KANTO! 'WAG KANG SUMAMA... PARANG MAGULO DITO!
INGAT KA... MAGKAKANDADO AKO RITO!
NASA MCDO SI ARVIN... NAG-KAGULO SA PINANGGALINGAN NIYA. MAY SUNOG...
SI JENNIFER...
#12
TO BE CONTINUED

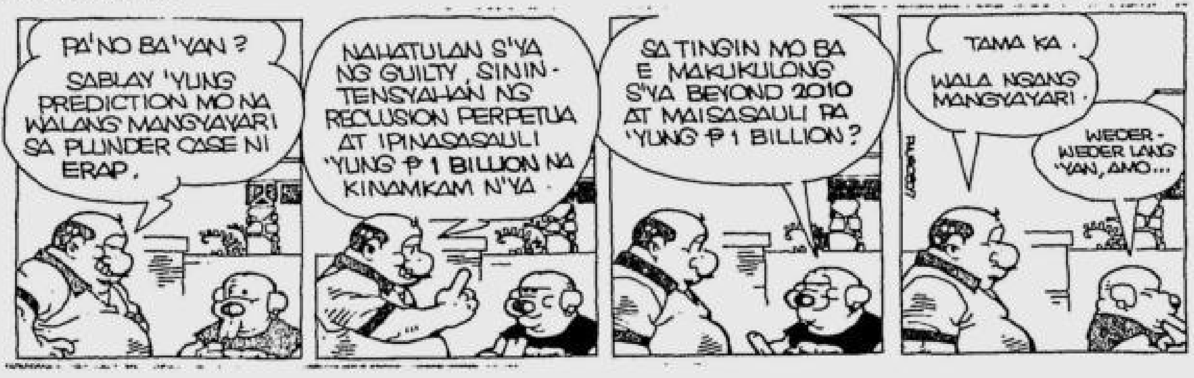
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


GABUNDOK NA 'TO, AH!
SMUGGLED CARS DIN BA ANG MGA YAN?
HINDI
BASURA?
HINDI
ANO YAN? ANG DAMI!
TAMBAK NA MGA GRAFT CASES NA NAKA PENDING SA MALACAÑANG!

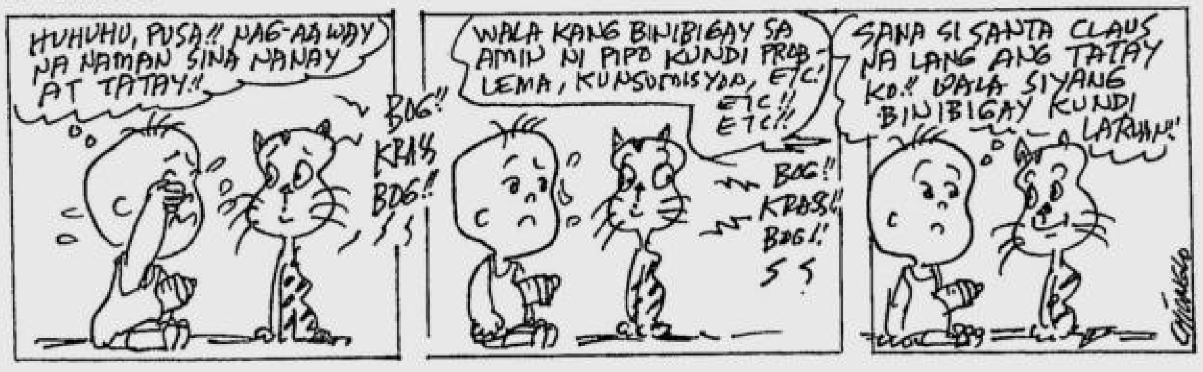
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


PA'NO BA'YAN? SABLAY 'YUNG PREDICTION MO NA WALANG MANGYAYARI SA PLUNDER CASE NI ERAP.
NAHATULAN S'YA NG GUILTY, SININ-TENSYAHAN NG RECLUSION PERPETUA AT IPINASASAULI 'YUNG ₱1 BILLION NA KINAMKAM N'YA.
SA TINGIN MO BA E MAKUKULONG S'YA BEYOND 2010 AT MAISASAULI PA 'YUNG ₱1 BILLION?
TAMA KA. WALA NGANG MANGYAYARI.
WEDER-WEDER LANG 'YAN, AMO...

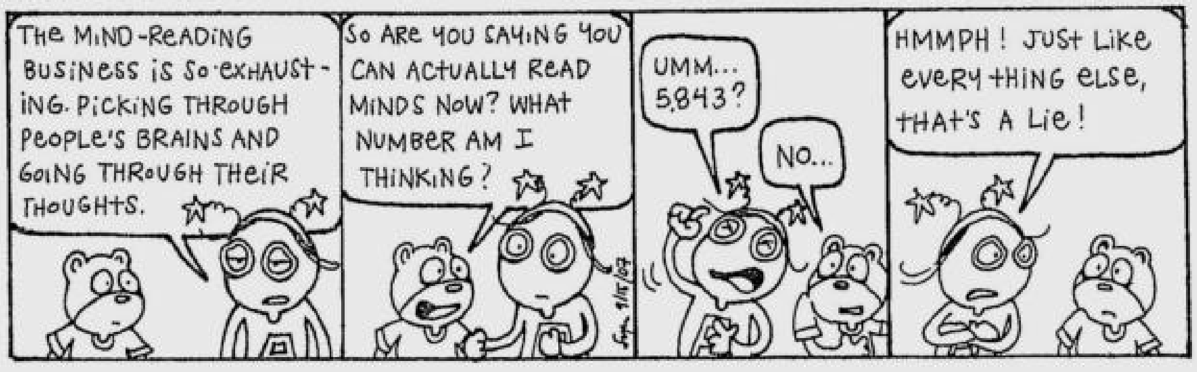
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


HUHUHU, PUSA!! NAG-AAWAY NA NAMAN SINA NANAY AT TATAY!!
BOG!! KRAS BOG!!
WALA KANG BINIBIGAY SA AMIN NI PIPO KUNDI PROB-LEMA, KUNSUMISYON, ETC! ETC!! ETC!!
BOG!! KRASS!! BOG!!
SANA SI SANTA CLAUS NA LANG ANG TATAY KO!! WALA SIYANG BINIBIGAY KUNDI LARUAN!
CHIONGLO

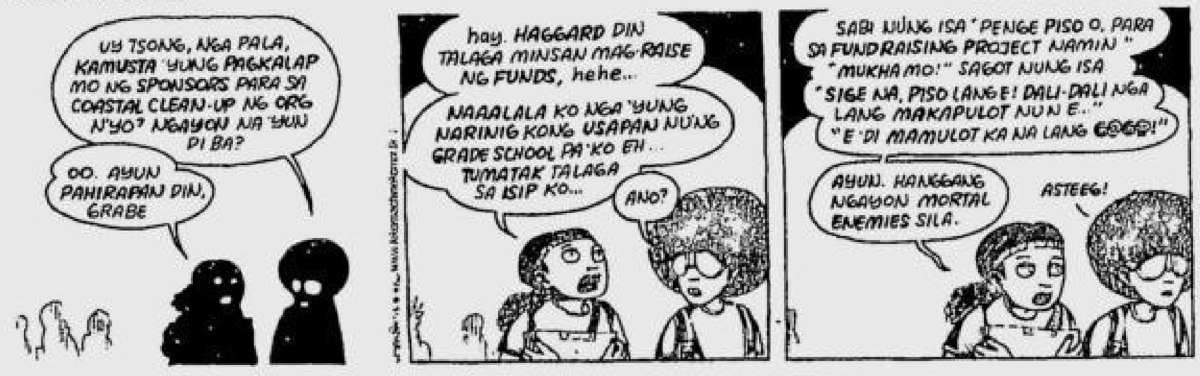
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


THE MIND-READING BUSINESS IS SO EXHAUST-ING. PICKING THROUGH PEOPLE'S BRAINS AND GOING THROUGH THEIR THOUGHTS.
SO ARE YOU SAYING YOU CAN ACTUALLY READ MINDS NOW? WHAT NUMBER AM I THINKING?
UMM... 5,843?
NO...
HMMPH! JUST LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE, THAT'S A LIE!

KIKO MACHINE

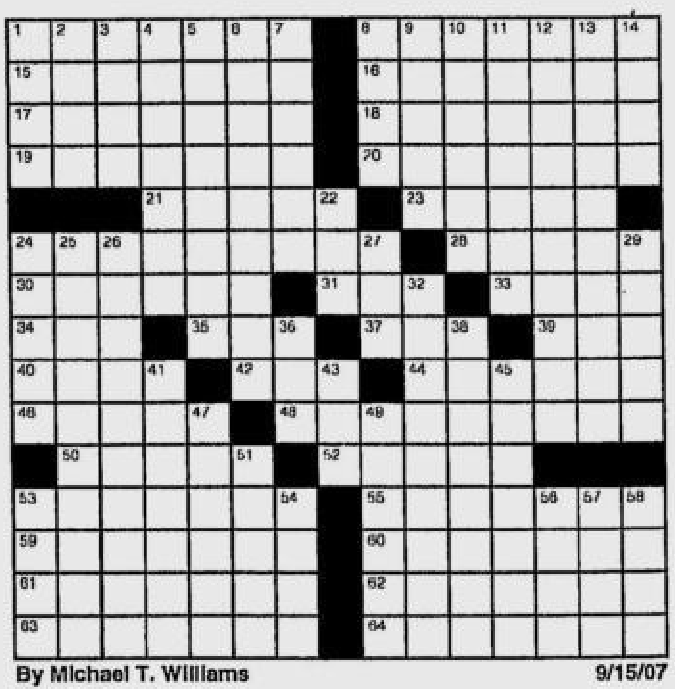
BY MANIX ABRERA


UY TSONG, NGA PALA, KAMUSTA 'YUNG PAGKALAP MO NG SPONSORS PARA SA COASTAL CLEAN-UP NG ORG N'YO? NGAYON NA 'YUN DI BA?
OO. AYUN PAHIRAPAN DIN, GRABE
hay. HAGGARD DIN TALAGA MINSAN MAG-RAISE NG FUNDS, hehe..
NAAALALA KO NGA 'YUNG NARINIG KONG USAPAN NUNG GRADE SCHOOL PA'KO EH... TUMATAK TALAGA SA ISIP KO...
ANO?
SABI NUNG ISA "PENGE PISO O, PARA SA FUNDRAISING PROJECT NAMIN" "MUKHA MO!" SAGOT NUNG ISA "SIGE NA, PISO LANG E! DALI-DALI NGA LANG MAKAPULOT NUN E.." "E 'DI MAMULOT KA NA LANG @#$@!"
AYUN. HANGGANG NGAYON MORTAL ENEMIES SILA.
ASTEEG!

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Himalayan climbers
8 Sirius
15 Make a putt
16 Angrily
17 Retired professional woman
18 Interstellar clouds
19 One who wills property
20 Bonds metals
21 Hemispherical roofs
23 Earthquake
24 Singer of love songs
28 British record label
30 Adjust in advance
31 Neon or radon
33 Marketed
34 PAU's successor
35 Line of seats
37 Education-minded grp.
39 Taro dish
40 Olfactory stimulus
42 Bobbsey twin
44 The Great Caruso
46 Like a school tablet
48 Primary parts of ships
50 Cod and May
52 Fathered
53 Persian governors
55 Processions
59 Peter and Annette
60 Indistinct
61 Impassioned
62 Toy racer
63 States forcefully
64 Most suspenseful

DOWN
1 Small storage building
2 Where the heart is
3 Hgt.
4 Roller coaster do-overs
5 Christie culprit, perhaps
6 Robot
7 Gawked
8 Noisy clamors
9 Sandwich cookies
10 Having a pitched roof
11 Hits the books
12 Compressible by sliding overlapping sections
13 Wake-up call, of a sort
14 Certain cereal grasses
22 Pc.
24 Thread reel
25 Wipes out completely
26 Some circuits
27 Knock
29 So long, senor
32 Equipped with a tiller
36 One-time female mil. group
38 Ian of Jethro Tull
41 Reprimand
43 Integers, briefly
45 Edits
47 Las Vegas pro
49 Retaliatory action
51 Worn out
53 Nap locale
54 Mach+ jets
56 Il ___ (Mussolini)
57 Time periods
58 Muralist Jose



By Michael T. Williams
Clearwater, FL

9/15/07

Friday's Puzzle Solved

C	P	L	■	I	S	S	U	E	■	O	B	E	S	E
Z	O	O	■	M	E	A	N	T	■	V	O	C	A	L
A	P	B	■	P	A	S	S	T	H	E	B	U	C	K
R	E	S	T	A	T	E	■	A	I	R	B	A	S	E
■	■	T	Y	C	O	B	B	■	P	A	L	■	■	■
C	R	E	P	T	■	O	E	O	■	R	E	G	A	L
L	A	R	O	S	A	■	E	X	A	M	■	I	Z	E
A	M	P	S	■	X	E	R	O	X	■	A	N	T	A
I	B	O	■	Y	E	S	M	■	L	O	D	G	E	S
M	O	T	T	O	■	Q	U	A	■	C	Z	E	C	H
■	■	■	A	D	V	■	G	R	A	T	E	R	■	■
U	S	S	T	E	E	L	■	B	R	A	S	S	E	S
S	H	E	L	L	E	Y	L	O	N	G	■	N	T	H
P	A	R	E	E	■	M	A	R	I	O	■	A	N	O
S	H	A	R	D	■	E	B	S	E	N	■	P	A	T

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9/15/07

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

		4		1				
		1	8		7	2		3
		7		9		8		
6			4	7	5			9
		3		8		1		
5		2	7		6	4		
				5		7		

Difficulty Level ★★★★

9/15

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Answer to previous puzzle

7	3	4	9	8	1	2	6	5
9	2	1	5	6	3	4	7	8
6	8	5	2	7	4	1	9	3
5	6	9	3	2	7	8	1	4
2	7	3	4	1	8	6	5	9
1	4	8	6	5	9	3	2	7
3	9	7	1	4	2	5	8	6
4	1	6	8	9	5	7	3	2
8	5	2	7	3	6	9	4	1

Difficulty Level ★★★★

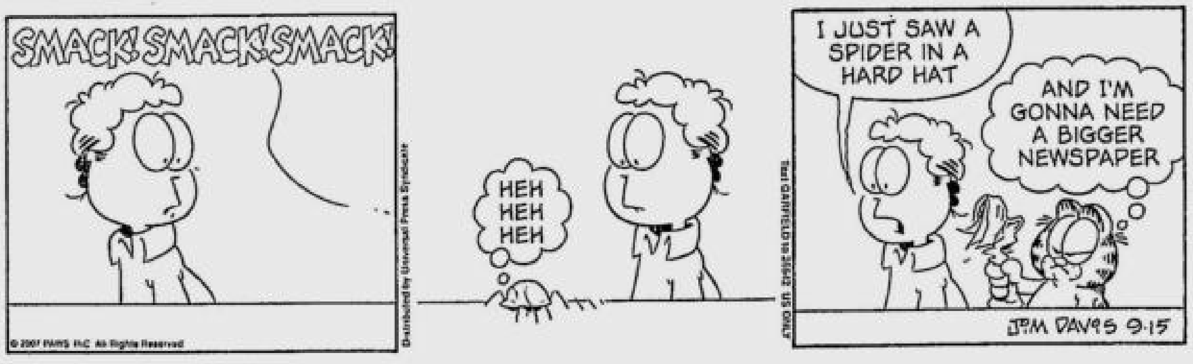
HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Please see tomorrow's issue of Sunday Inquirer Magazine for the answer to today's puzzle

GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


SMACK! SMACK! SMACK!
HEH HEH HEH
I JUST SAW A SPIDER IN A HARD HAT
AND I'M GONNA NEED A BIGGER NEWSPAPER
JIM DAVIS 9-15
© 2007 PAWS INC All Rights Reserved

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're smart, friendly and independent. You enjoy being in pristine nature. You like good food and beautiful surroundings. It's important for you to get a good education, because you want to learn. You also have a strong drive to become a better person. You can flourish in the arts, the sciences or business. Expect a social, fun-loving year ahead. Enjoy!

Birthdate of: Prince Harry, British royal; Tommy Lee Jones, actor; Jackie Cooper, actor/director.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Do whatever you can to make your life run more efficiently and effectively. In particular, clean up messy areas. Clean out your fridge.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Give yourself opportunities to play and have fun. Enjoy sports, the theater, vacations and fun times with others. Explore romantic possibilities!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Discussions with a parent could be significant. Your focus is definitely on home, real estate or domestic matters right now. You have a lot of private thinking to do.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is not a time to stay at home. You have too much to do! Short trips, errands and increased time with siblings and relatives keep you on the go.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You're concerned with money issues lately. You're also thinking about how to earn more money. Naturally, some of you are also thinking about spending money! (It was ever thus.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): This is a high-energy time for you, because both Saturn and the Sun are in your sign. You practically feel driven. This is good. You're going to reinvent yourself in the next seven years.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Take as many opportunities as you can find to relax and lie low. You need time just for yourself to ponder life, and to think about what you want your new year to hold.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Your popularity is strong now. Accept all invitations. Enjoy the company of others. Talk to friends about your hopes for the future.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Parents and authority figures are important in your life right now. Others see you in a very favorable light. They think you're the cat's pajamas. Milk this for all it's worth!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): This is an excellent time to explore opportunities for more education or further training. You might also want to travel. You want to broaden your skills and your experiences.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): It's tough to deal with the values of others when those values differ from yours. Nevertheless, this is the challenge on your plate right now. Good luck.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Work hard to come to a mutual arrangement or agreement with a partner or close friend. Remember that compromise will probably be in the picture.

Bad guys have more fun in 'Underdog'

By Noelani Torre

BEFORE IT WAS A LIVE-ACTION MOVIE spiffed up with CGI, "Underdog" was simply a drawn albeit much-loved 1960s-70s cartoon strip that was originally intended to be a breakfast cereal mascot for General Mills.

Those who grew up watching this four-legged caped crusader remember him as a droopy-eared, round-bellied dork of a dog that spoke in rhymes in the pedantic tones of funnyman Wally Cox. That dog does show up in the opening credits of the big-screen adaptation—but that's the first and last time you'll ever see him in the movie.

The original Underdog was quite nerdy (he'd have to be, with a slogan like "Never fear, Underdog is here!"), but his 21st century version, though a bit of a loser, speaks in the down-home, Southern-flavored voice of Jason Lee.

Biggest change

The biggest change, though, is of course the fact that Underdog is a real live dog. The part is played by an adorable beagle, Leo—and he does his job well! However, you can't say the same about director Frederik Du Chau or scriptwriters Adam Rifkin, Joe Piscatella and Craig A. Willliams.

The film's plot turns are predictable, and the holes in the story are huge. If this were a half-hour cartoon episode with commercial breaks, you'd no doubt swallow it whole and enjoy it.

But, this is a full-length feature that stars real people and real dogs (whose mouths have been manipulated *via* CGI to look like they speak like humans). There are no commercial breaks to distract you from the thinness of the material or from its lack of laughs.

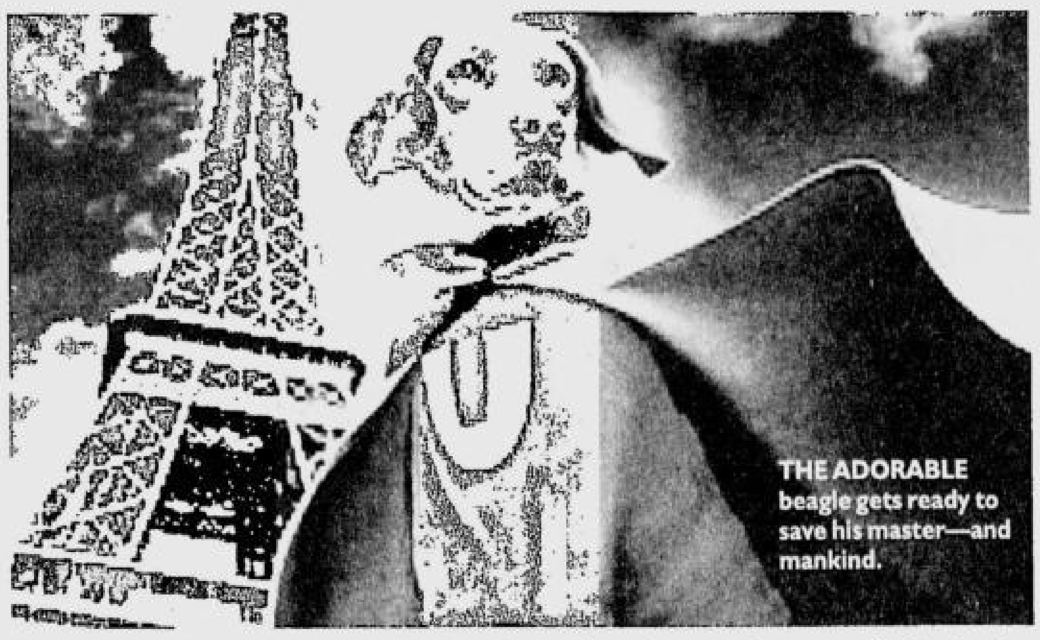
Blue capes

Strangely enough, despite the fact that the movie's visuals are slicker than the cartoon's, the film doesn't have the energy of the original, nor its sense of sheer, good, old-fashioned fun. It just plods along, flying beagles in red sweaters and blue capes notwithstanding.

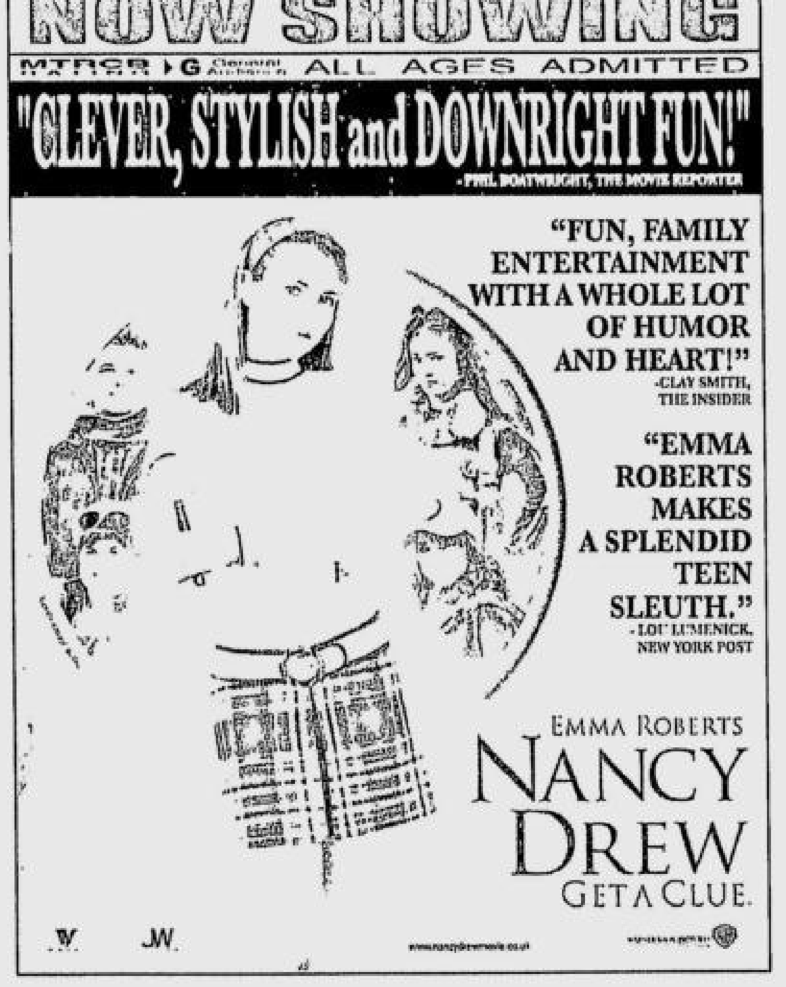
The original "Underdog" poked gentle fun at the whole superhero tradition—and at Superman, in particular. The live-action version attempts the same thing, but never quite pulls it off. Everything here is treated with too heavy a hand for parody.

The scene where Underdog tumbles back to earth from outer space *ala* "Superman Returns" is mildly amusing, but a "Lady and the Tramp" scene between Underdog and his love interest (Polly Purebred, played by Ginger) doesn't go anywhere.

The only ones who seem to be having fun here are the bad guys, Dr. Simon Barsinister (Peter Dinlage) and Cad (Patrick Warburton), who really ham it up!



THE ADORABLE beagle gets ready to save his master—and mankind.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"FUN, FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT WITH A WHOLE LOT OF HUMOR AND HEART!"
-CLAY SMITH, THE INSIDER
"EMMA ROBERTS MAKES A SPLENDID TEEN SLEUTH."
-LOU LUMENICK, NEW YORK POST
EMMA ROBERTS
NANCY DREW
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AT THE CINEMAS

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Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729-7777

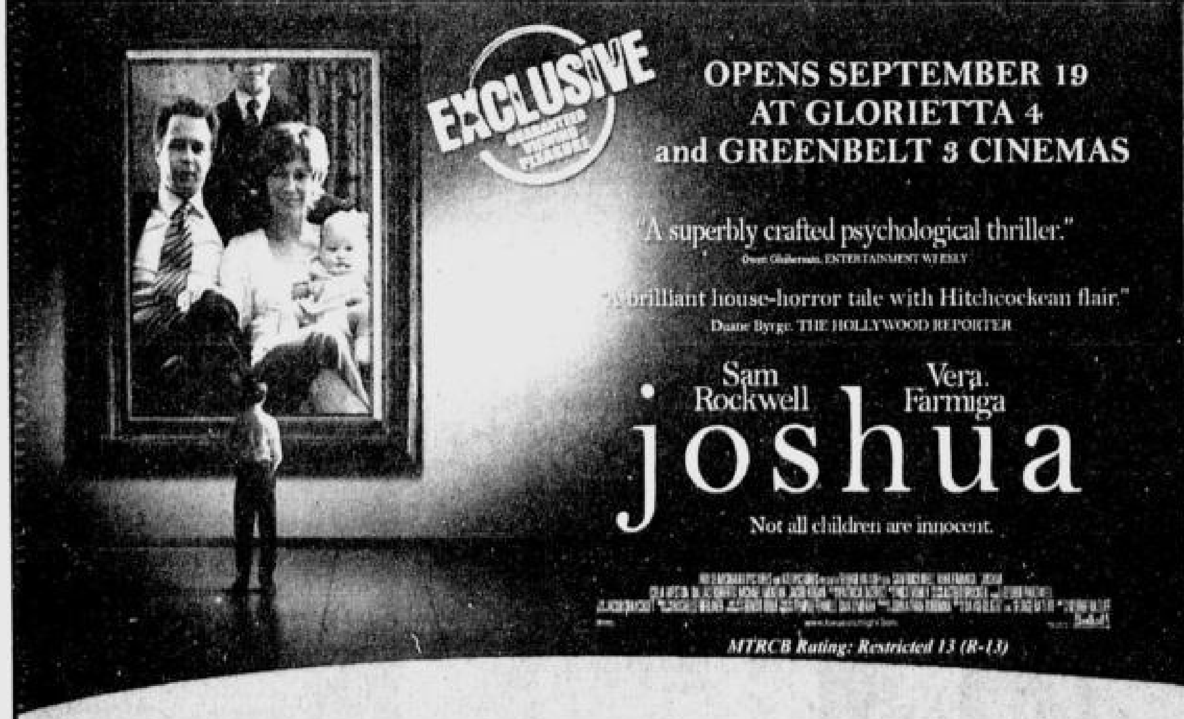
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
GLORIETTA 1	FOSTER CHILD	ROGUE ASSASIN	THE BRAVE ONE	DAYWATCH			
GLORIETTA 4	UNDERDOG	I KNOW WHO KILLED ME	THX THE BRAVE ONE GUARANTEED SEATS	NANCY DREW / THE INVASION	DISTURBIA	ROGUE ASSASIN	1408
GREENBELT 1	ROGUE ASSASIN	THE BRAVE ONE					
GREENBELT 3	THX ROGUE ASSASIN GUARANTEED SEATS	THX THE BRAVE ONE GUARANTEED SEATS	DISTURBIA GUARANTEED SEATS	I KNOW WHO KILLED ME GUARANTEED SEATS	UNDERDOG GUARANTEED SEATS		
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	THX THE BRAVE ONE	ROGUE ASSASIN	UNDERDOG	I KNOW WHO KILLED ME	DISTURBIA		
AYALA CENTER CEBU	DISTURBIA	UNDERDOG	PAN'S LABYRINTH	BUG			
MARKET! MARKET!	ROGUE ASSASIN	FOSTER CHILD	I KNOW WHO KILLED ME	THE BRAVE ONE	UNDERDOG		
TRINOMA • THX Certified • All-Digital Sound • All-Stadium Seating • Computerized Ticketing System • Recliner Seats	FOSTER CHILD	DISTURBIA	UNDERDOG GUARANTEED SEATS	I KNOW WHO KILLED ME GUARANTEED SEATS	1408	ROGUE ASSASIN	THX THE BRAVE ONE GUARANTEED SEATS

AT THE MALLS

CONCIERGE HOTLINE NUMBERS:
Glorietta - 752 7272
Greenbelt - 757 4853 to 54
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; 772 1860
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc. 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519
TriNoma - 901 3000

Ayala

glorietta	Samsung's Best of the Best Taekwondo Competition September 12 to 16, 2007 at the Glorietta Activity Center
GREENBELT	Greenbelt 5 Sneak Peek Presents: Collection of Kate Torralba September 12 to 23, 2007 at Greenbelt 3 Lobby
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	Anson's Exhibit September 1 to 16, 2007 at the Activity Center
AYALA CENTER CEBU	Elliot Yamin of American Idol Live! September 26; 6 PM; OnStage (Cinema 1)
MARKET! MARKET!	The Great Sports Sale September 10 & 16, 2007 at the Activity Center
Onstage	Repertory Philippines presents Disney's CINDERELLA Kids at REP's Globe Theater - Opens August 11, 2007 For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710
Ayala MUSEUM	Pioneers of Philippine Art: Transnationalism in the Late 19th - 20th century June 18, 2007 to January 6, 2008 at the 3rd Floor Gallery For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org
Tri Noma	Samsung Exhibit An exhibit of the latest Samsung mobile phones September 14 to 16; 10am to 9 pm; Starbucks / Food Choices Level 2


EXCLUSIVE

OPENS SEPTEMBER 19
AT GLORIETTA 4
and GREENBELT 3 CINEMAS

"A superbly crafted psychological thriller."
Owen Gleiberman, ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

"A brilliant house-horror tale with Hitchcockean flair."
Duane Byrge, THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

Sam Rockwell Vera Farmiga
joshua
Not all children are innocent.

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 13 (R-13)

Catch American Idol finalist Elliott Yamin in a live concert at the Ayala Malls!

TriNoma
Activity Center
September 21
7:00pm

Glorietta
Activity Center
September 22
7:00pm

Market! Market!
Activity Center
September 23
6:00pm

Ayala Center Cebu
On Stage
September 26
6:00pm

Alabang Town Center
Activity Center
September 28
6:30pm

glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! TriNoma

Close call for Vanessa Hudgens

HUDGENS. Second chance.

By Nestor U. Torre

AFTER "HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL 2" pulled in a record 17 million viewers on cable TV, its female lead, Vanessa Hudgens, was flying high. Her career arc soared even higher when she won an award for Female Breakout Artist at the Teen Choice Awards.

The Fil-Am comer wowed the viewing public even more when she proclaimed that she wanted to be a good, clean-living role model for other teens.

Inspiring proclamation

—What a difference a couple of weeks make! Soon after she made that inspiring proclamation, Vanessa's high-flying career crashed with a thud and threatened to self-destruct when her nude photo was made shockingly public.

Naturally, all righteous hell broke loose as media pundits underscored the bittersweet irony of the purported "good role model" suddenly revealing the naked, shocking truth.

The fact that she was still in her teens made the exposé even more alarming. And the fact that the "High School Musical" series of TV movies were produced by squeaky-clean Disney Channel added to fears that the young singer-actress would be pulled out of the series' next sequel, set to be produced for the big screen.

Most fearful of all were Vanessa's Filipino and Fil-Am fans, who empathetically shared in her success—and now, possibly in her impending debacle.

How ironic that this sweet *Pinay* talent would now be disparagingly talked about in the same shoddy league as other celebrities, like Paris Hilton and Vanessa Williams, whose sexy photos or tapes also went lewdly public.

Sincere apology

To her credit, Vanessa quickly issued a sincere apology for the unauthorized release of her nude photo. Her defenders just as quickly pointed out that it wasn't a published photograph, as in William's case, but a private photo which was "mysteriously," maliciously leaked to the public.

Those actions helped still the turbulent waters a bit, but everyone waited with bated breath for Disney's official reaction. Only when it came did Vanessa and her supporters breathe a collective sigh of relief: Disney opted to retain Vanessa's services for its current and subsequent projects—so, after her painfully close call, she was finally home free!

Disney's réaction disappointed some people who wanted the studio to uphold its "general patronage" standard. They accused Disney of opting to protect its financial investment in Vanessa, rather than vivifying its vaunted principles.

Embarrassment

On the other hand, Disney was praised for having a big enough heart to forgive Vanessa despite the embarrassment she had caused the studio and channel. They correctly maintained that everybody deserved a second chance—and that included Vanessa.

What a relief! Vanessa can now continue to further her career and perhaps eventually fly higher in US entertainment than any Fil-Am talent to date.

We trust that her "shocking" experience has made her a wiser person: Absolutely no more "private" nude photos, *please!*

MONTAGE

''Wag Kang Lilingon' on PBO

PBO, VIVA ENTERTAINMENT'S cable channel, screens the spine-tingling film, "'Wag Kang Lilingon," at 9:30 p.m. on Sept. 28. The eerie movie topbills Anne Curtis, Kristine Hermosa, Cherry Pie Picache, Baron Geisler, Dimples Romana, Archie Alemania, Celine Lim, Raymond Bagatsing and Marvin Agustin.

Smart subscribers can now view PBO movies on their mobile phones through Smart Communications' My TV service.

Attention, digital filmmakers: The PBO Digitales competition deadline is on Oct. 21. The contest gives aspiring filmmakers the chance to win cash prizes and showcase their works on a major cable channel.

Movies on PBO this month: Today, "Biktima." Sept. 17, "Sinasamba Kita." Sept. 18, "Ang Lahat ng Ito'y Para sa Iyo." Sept. 19, "Ang Probinsiano." Sept. 20, "Dos Bravos." Sept 22, "Nakagapos na Puso." Sept. 24, "Mumbaki." Sept. 25, "Bakit May Pag-ibig Pa?" Sept. 26, "Lucas Abellardo." Sept. 29, "Tayong Dalawa."

PASCUAL. Endorses high-quality Sky Travel bags.

Piolo for Sky Travel

Acclaimed actor, Piolo Pascual, endorses Sky Travel, a new array of high-quality luggage, computer bags and portfolios ideal for the modern traveler, businessmen and professionals. Sky Travel bags are available at Landmark, Robinsons and Gaisano department stores nationwide.

'Art 2 Art'

Lisa Macuja's radio program, "Art 2 Art," is aired at 3 p.m. Sundays on dzRH, the flagship station of the Manila Broadcasting Co , which covers 97 percent of the archipelago. One of Lisa's recent guests was poet, fictionist, essayist and playwright, Vim Nadera.

CONSTANTINO. Performs at SM City Clark today.

Grand opening

Bacolod Chicken Inasal opens its first branch outside Metro Manila today at SM City Clark in Angeles, Pampanga. Celebrations include a special concert featuring Yeng Constantino at the mall's Events Center at 5 p.m. Jason Abalos and Valeen Montenegro will also grace the event.

'Saan Nagtatago si Happiness?'

Cinemalaya 2006 box-office hit, "Saan Nagtatago si Happiness?," is now on DVD video at www.regalfilms.com. The light and breezy comedy-drama-musical tackles man's elusive search for happiness in jauntily *Pinoy* fashion. It stars Andy Bais, Caridad Sanchez and Ricky Davao.

Monique plays Eve Ensler

Theater buffs in the Visayas have something to look forward to on Sept. 21. Monique Wilson returns to the New Voice Company's "The Good Body" when Eve Ensler's critically-acclaimed hit production performs at Silliman University's Luce Auditorium on Friday at 8 p.m. in Dumaguete City.

Monique will be joined by acclaimed theater veteran Juno Henares and exciting young

'WAG/ H2

WILSON. Performs in "The Good Body."

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*Tide, Colgate, Head and Shoulders, Cream Silk Conditioner, Lucky Me, Modess, and Pond's
Promo period is from August 15 to November 30, 2007. See flyers for complete details.

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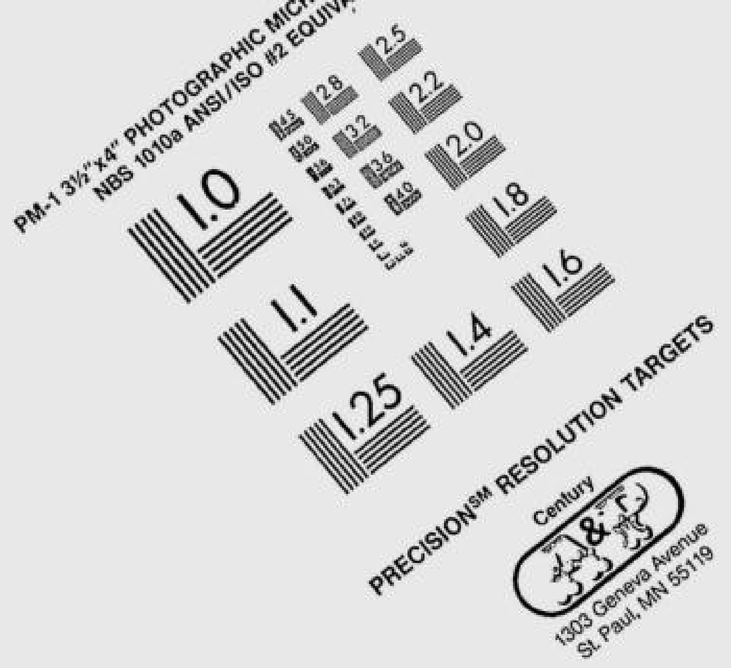
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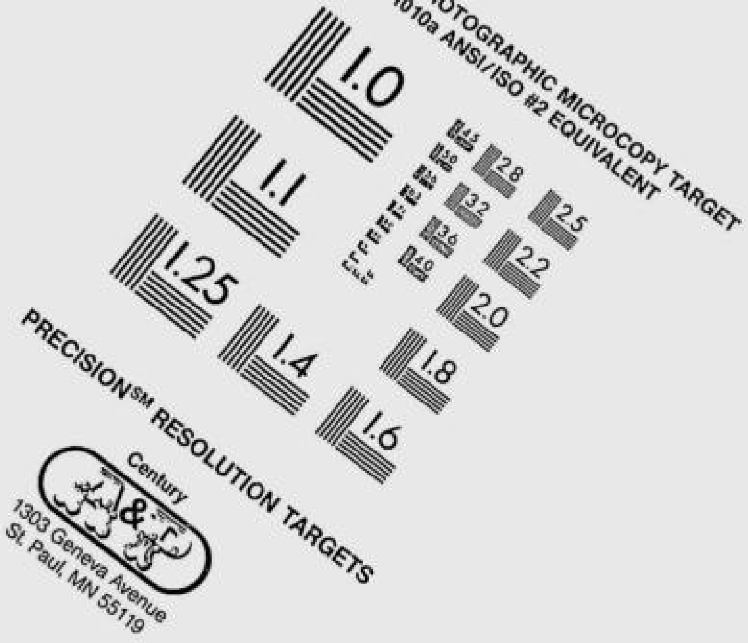
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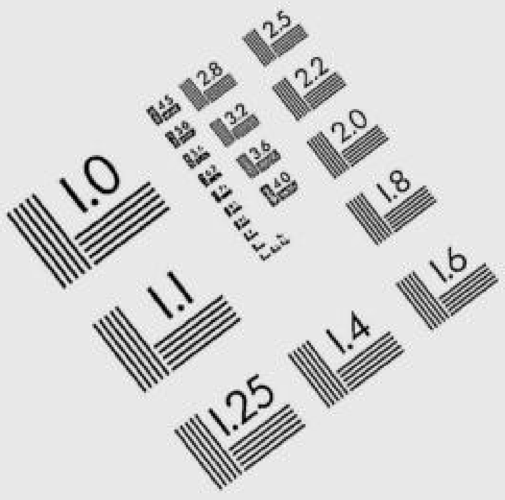

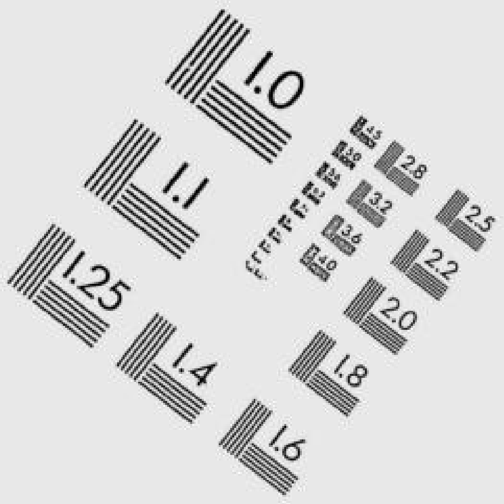

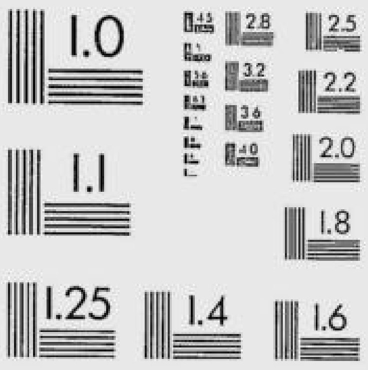
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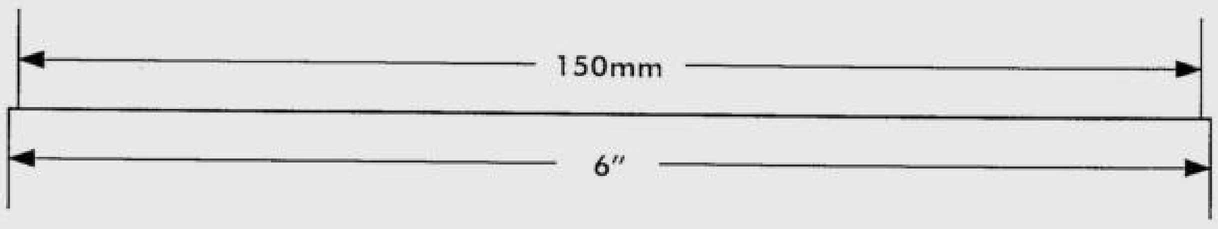

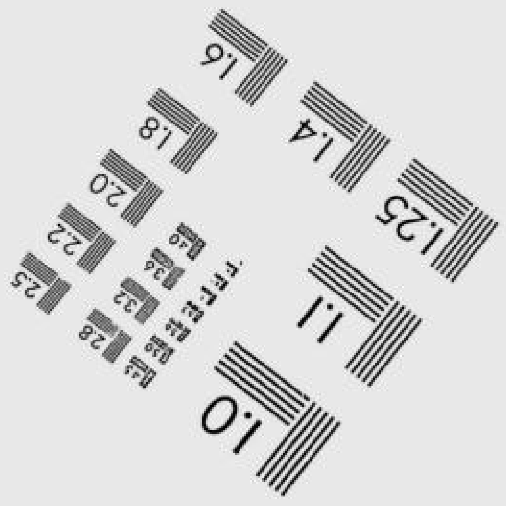

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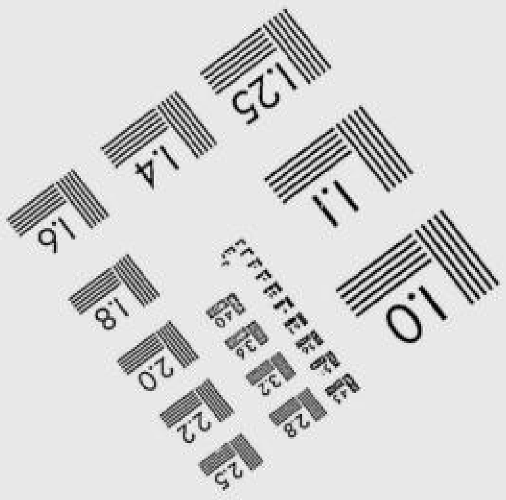

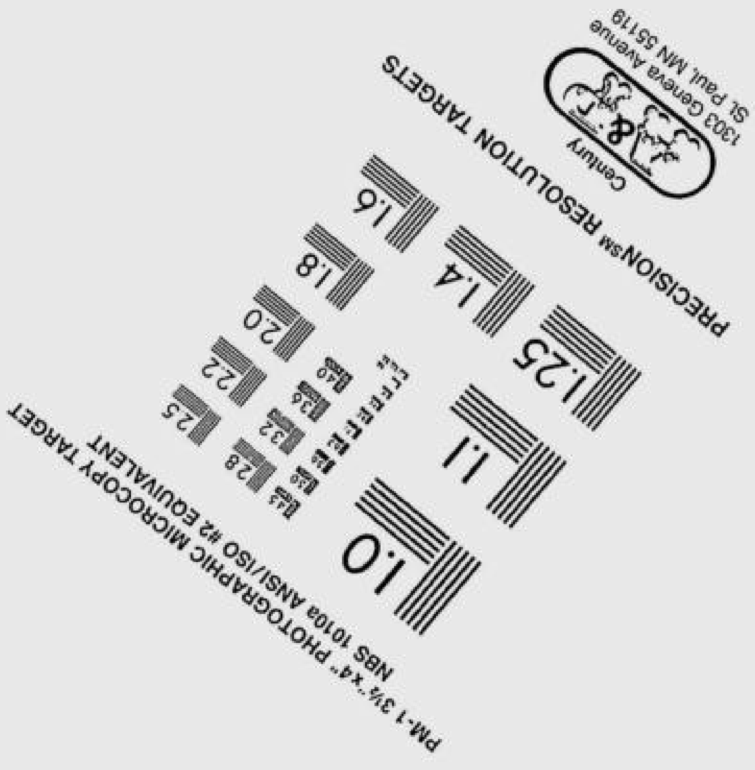
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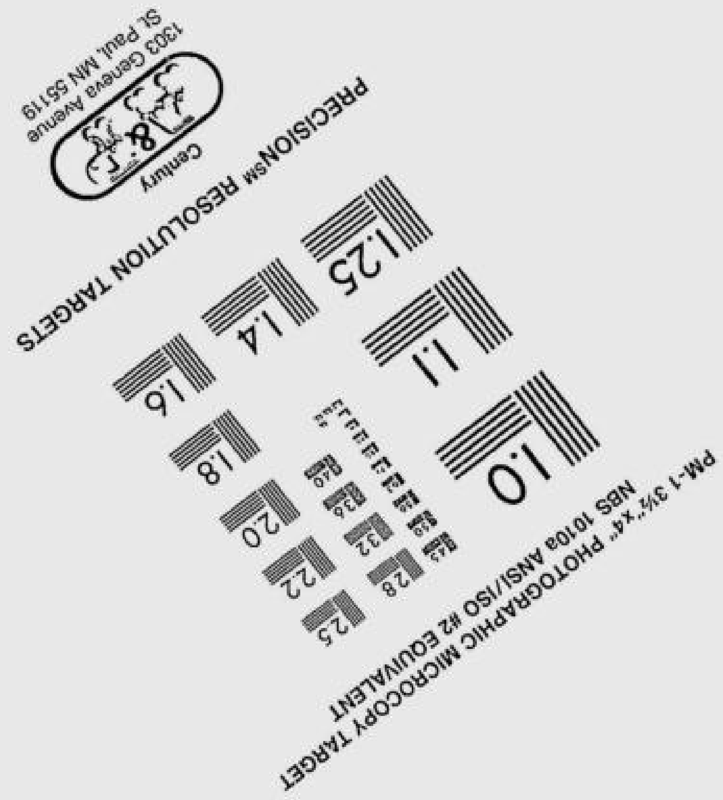
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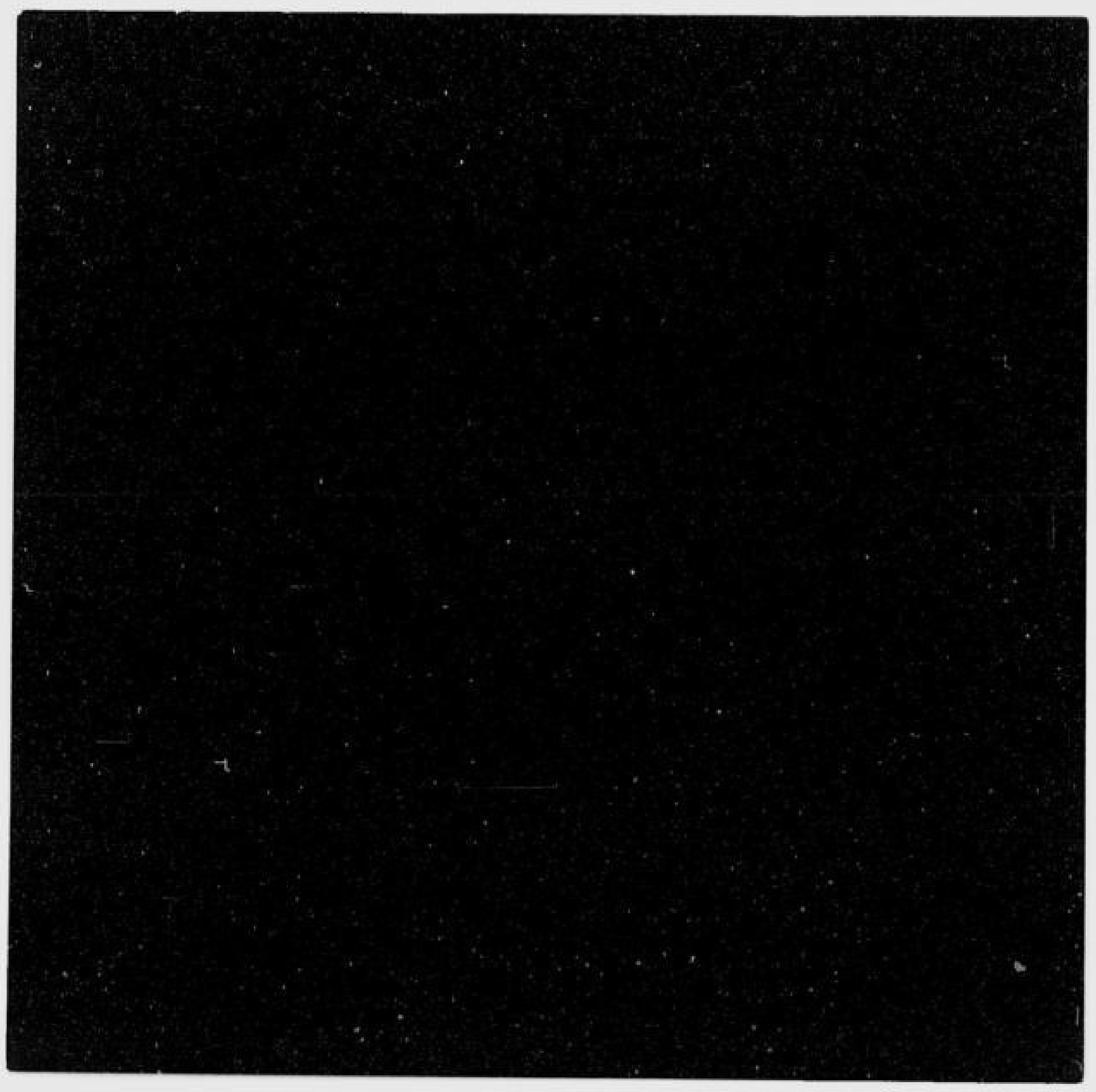

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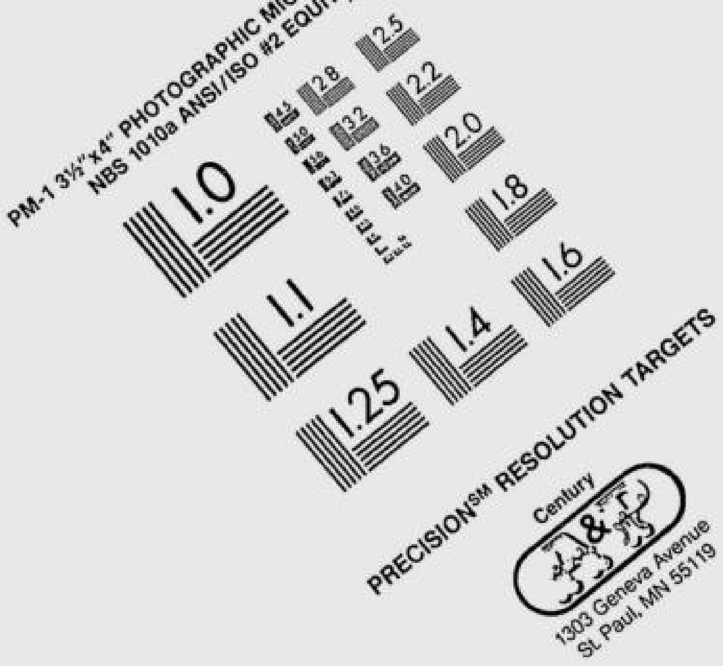
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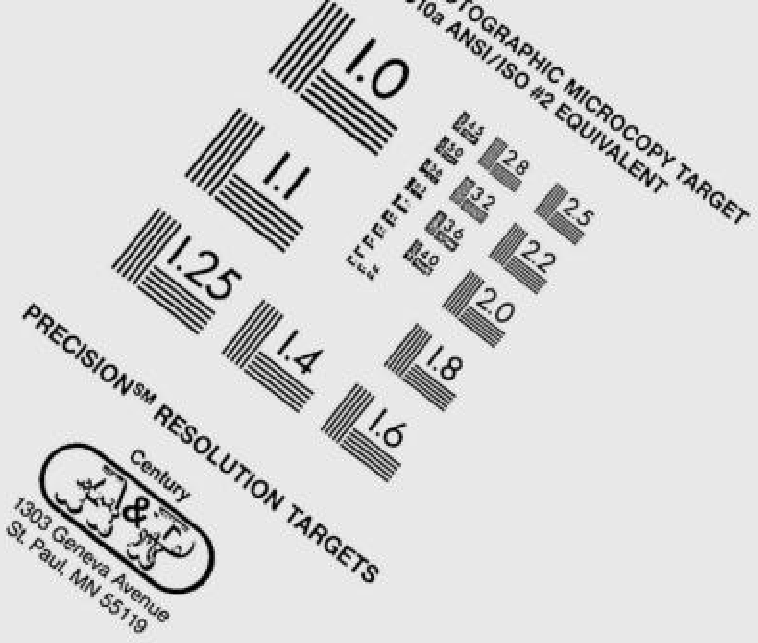
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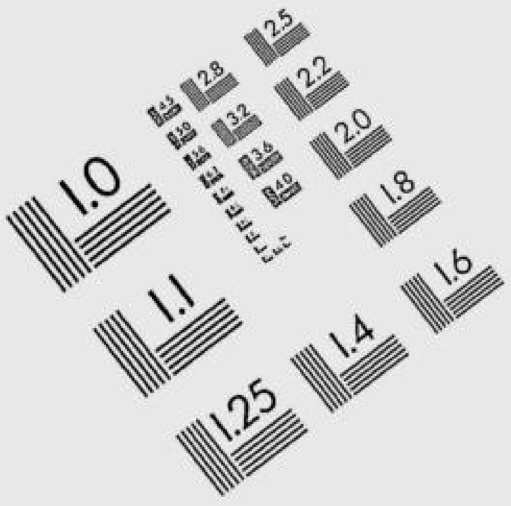
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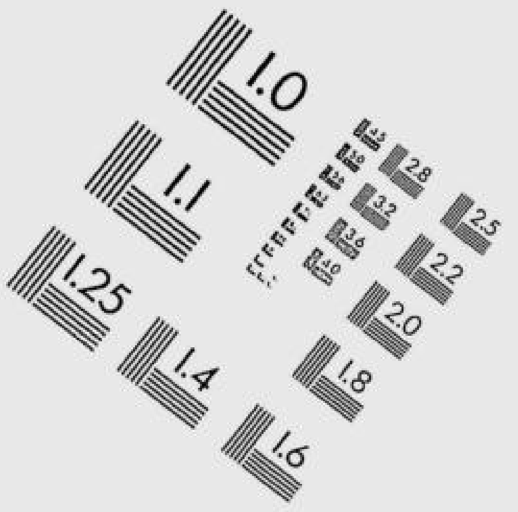
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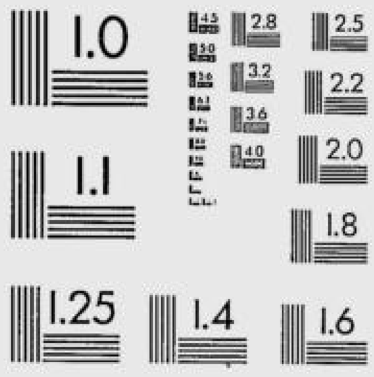
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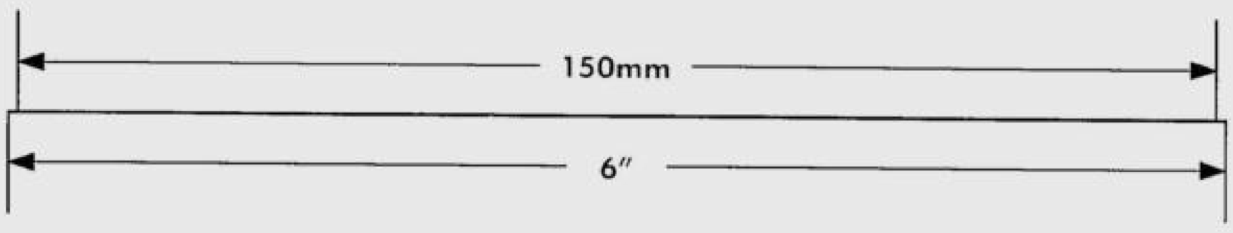

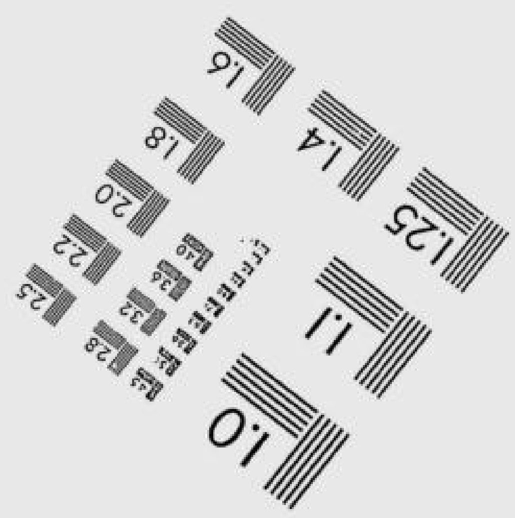
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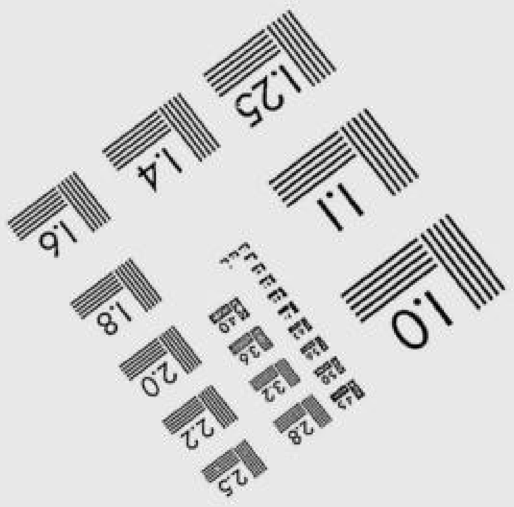
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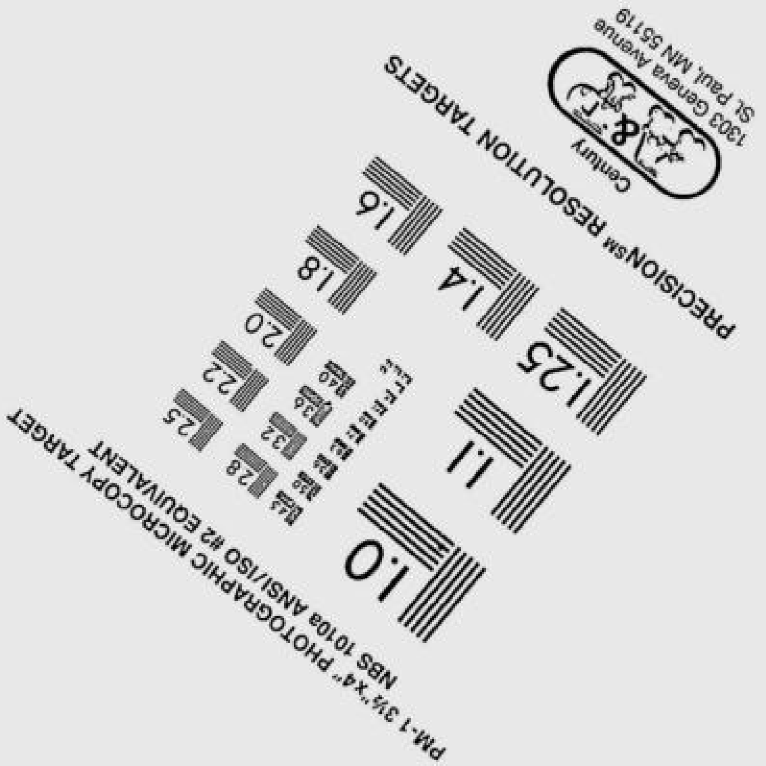
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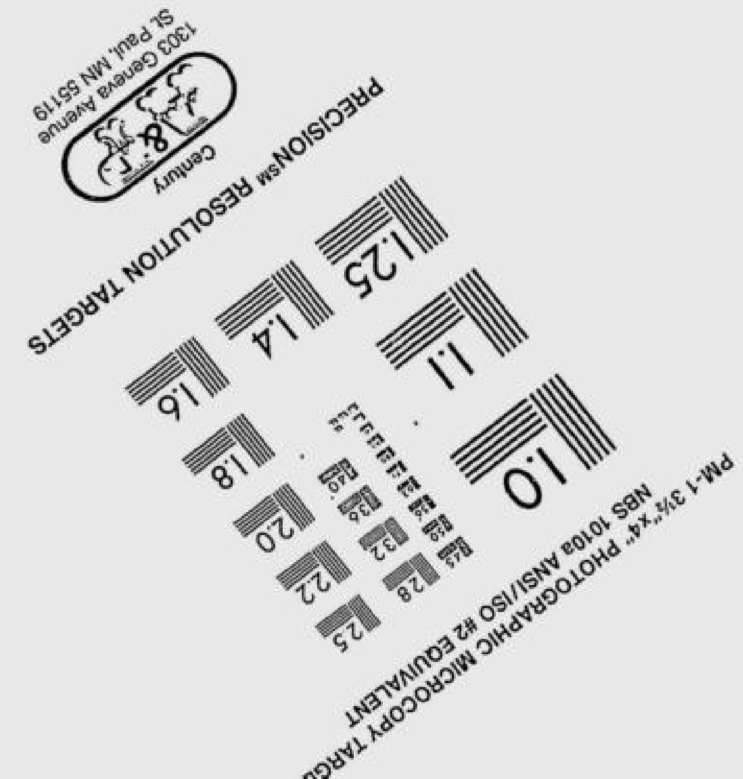
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